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On Choosing Books for Children

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Courtesy of the American Library Association.

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We finished reading *Mischief In Fez* by candlelight because we couldn't possibly leave it until the next day. The small boy was sitting straight up in bed, his eyes shining with excitement. The two older boys, who have a way of wandering in when reading aloud is going on, were stretched out lazily on the other cot. Outside, the waves were wash-washing against the shore, and we were grateful for the salty ocean which kept the *Hidden Ones* from journeying all the way from Morocco to the shores of America and to our safe little Minnesota lake. We read until, all danger past, peace came once more to the household of Muhammed Ali. A last look to be sure that the clothes were right side out and neatly folded, for Baba had taught us what mischief befalls the untidy ones; then the candle was snuffed out, and the night with nothing more to trouble us than the memory of a djinn closed about the cottage. Unfortunate, indeed, are they who have relinquished the world of children's books—there is such joy to be found in them. Whatever childish things may be put away, the best in children's literature remains a delight whatever the age of the reader. The mature mind alone can relish to the full such books as *The Wind in the Willow*, *The Hunting of the Snark*, the stories of Hans Christian Andersen and of A. A. Milne, Russian folklore as it is found in the Zeitlin Skazki, Ella Young's beautiful telling of the Irish tales, and all the others which belong to childhood itself and by which one grows in grace with each re-reading through the year.

These are testing times—and once again, we are weighing value against value and in turn are looking at our children's books with a keener glance. While only that which is fine endures, there is a constant stream of that which can never be worthy and which we continue to purchase for our children. Strangely enough, there still exists a feeling that anyone can write a book for children, just as there is even among educators who should know better a feeling that anyone who can speak the language can teach English. It is well to pause at times, not only for the outward but for the inward glance, to be sure, like Jerker, that we are remembering to be a man; and in our case that we are not forgetful of that most exciting of privileges—the putting of books into the hands of children. It is a very easy gesture to exonerate ourselves and to look askance at authors and publishers saying: These are the books they give us. But that is not true. The publishing game is a business concern and not an act of philanthropy. For the many good books which are available, we may thank the children's editors who have had the courage and the vision to hold to that which is altogether good. That we still have too many books which are inadequate, we may thank to a small extent the reviewers who lack either the discrimination or the courage to tell the truth about them, and to a large extent the purchasing public which makes such books sell.

There is no great Mystery of Book Selection to which only a few of the initiate hold the secret. In fact, the principles of choosing books whether for adults or for children are in themselves so elementary, so obvious, that once said they seem almost axiomatic.

Two fundamentals should be kept in mind. Neither one is of less importance than the other; but together they form the scale on which the value of a book is balanced: the material with which the book is concerned must be honestly and adequately presented within whatever frame has been chosen; and the quality of the writing should never falter. Curiously enough, the two go hand in hand. A book in which mediocrity of style is evident more often than not proves to be insecure in the subject matter. This is equally true whether the book be for informational or for

pleasure reading. Quality is an elusive thing—more noticeable in books, as it is in people, by its absence than by its presence.



From *The Brave and the Free* ("Reading for Interest"), Heath. Drawn by Harve Stein.

A first essential is that the style be suited to the purpose of the book. If that purpose be the adding of information, then the writing must be clear and easily understood. In her article "Methods of Teaching Science to Children" (*Science Education*, January, 1939), Helen Blough has put it exactly: "Through third grade, children are so busy learning to read that any reading to learn should be very simple." Even after the third grade, there are still too many books in which the language difficulty is a barrier to the acquisition of knowledge. This does not mean that books must be written in words of one syllable, nor that the sentences march monotonously forward without variation in structure. Nor let us ever forget that the boy or girl who is genuinely interested in a subject such as aviation may have a vocabulary within that field which might well daunt an interested-in-knitting-and-recipes adult. We who have achieved an adult language skill tend to evaluate the difficulty of children's books on the basis of our own adequacy or inadequacy of vocabulary.

Then there must be books for children to grow on. This is a formative period, the time in which they are increasing in language skill

and in a feeling for words. Therefore it becomes imperative that even in books for small children the writing be worthy of their eager minds. We have been so careful in these growing years that they should have carrots and orange juice and codliver oil—but we have been so negligent of their mental diet. Too often content with less than the best, content, in fact, with a meagre least. Keeping them on literary pap is no preparation for a heritage of great literature in adult reading. No greater service could be done than to destroy every book for children in which there is trite and slovenly writing. Let that be reserved for adults who choose their own books and for whom the pattern is already set.

And above all, in writing for children, there should be no condescension, no obvious attempt to simplify. Suppose a foreigner should choose to write a book about our country and do it in the following fashion. *Cities in the United States are difficult to remember so we will not call them by name but by characteristic*—and then proceed to discuss the *City of Baked Beans*, *Meat Packing Town*, and *Moving Picture Village* instead of Boston, Chicago, and Hollywood. Such ridiculous and absurd oversimplification detracts from whatever merit there may be in a book—and yet that is the very pattern with which one author chose to present Mexico to the children of the United States. So from the Least 'Un to the eldest, let our children have books with clarity of language, with simplicity and strength of style, let them have beautiful, singing words to remember against an hour of need; and then we shall not have to worry about what they read and what they think when they are to manhood grown.

Of equal importance with style, and more obvious, is the content of a book. Beautifully written words which enclose a vacuum can have little merit. For books whose purpose is to give information, it is apparent that the author should know what he is writing about; and in such fields as science, modern history, geography, the material should be brought up to date and not be outmoded. Books for very young children should be as sound in the subject with which they are concerned as books for adults, although it may be only the most elementary facts which are presented. Just as in the building of vocabulary this is

the time in which children are reaching out toward the unfamiliar, it is also the time in which they are gaining concepts and attitudes as well as knowledge. We all know that in any skill, it is more difficult to unlearn that which is incorrect, and then relearn it correctly, than it is to start from the beginning; but we are so careless about the more intangible growth of the child, his thoughts and his beliefs, his understanding and his tolerance. These cannot be a sudden acquisition of the adult years, but can come only as a flowering of that which has taken root in childhood.

In all books, whether they are written for information or for pleasure, there should be a fundamental integrity. If the book is a story



From *Twelve Bright Trumpets*. By Margaret Leighton.
(Houghton, Mifflin)

of family life, then the book should have vitality—the children, the parents, the situations should be real. Some of the most puerile writing of the last year is to be found in children's books on Latin America. They picture

a master race of children solving problems which have daunted the adults. They find work for themselves, work for the family, and even locate houses which are suddenly and amazingly vacant at just the right moment. Before this, we suffered from an epidemic of runaway burros, market scenes, hidden treasure in the Andes, and miraculous escapes from the sacred cenote of Yucatan. In contrast to these one thinks gratefully of such books as *The Village That Learned to Read* with its account of the opening of a school in a village in Mexico, and the boy who wanted to be a bull fighter so what was the use of learning to read! The understanding of his family in the situation, the moments of laughter and of excitement are all sound, and are delightfully real. There are the Waldeck's books on the jungle, and Delia Goetz' quietly charming story of *Panchita*, the little Guatemalan girl who made the doll tea set. For very young children, *Manuela's Birthday* will be loved so long as there are children who have birthdays and who cherish dolls.

We cannot all be authorities on every country or on every subject, but we can ask this of each book: Do the children come alive on the pages or are they only puppets? Do they do things within the capacity of a child? It is true that children are often capable of more than we give them credit for. Our grandparents' stories of pioneer life are evidence of that; and all over the world today children are proving themselves. Nevertheless, when children continue to solve mysteries and to support families while adults stand apathetically by, one may question the author's real knowledge of what he writes. Another question which we might well ask is this: If the book were about my own country would I feel that it added to an understanding of the country? Even among authorities, there is a feeling that a book which would be condemned if written for adults, is quite acceptable since it is only for children. But the adult of tomorrow is the child who today may have based his knowledge upon incorrect and inadequate writing.

The second great fallacy upon which book selection is based is that since the book is the only one in the field, it can be put into the hands of children. Over and over again this argument has been used as justification for

the purchase of a mediocre book. Pressure is put upon by librarians, by teachers who are desperately in need of material. Pressure is put upon teachers by curriculum makers who set up beautiful courses of study in which no material exists at the reading level of the child who is to study it, and publishers rush onto the market anything which will meet the demand. Good books do not grow that way—even good factual books need a time of thinking over, and an author who has some background with which to do the thinking.

And now, having suggested the quality of writing and of content which should be found in books for children, we come to that really entrancing part of book selection: What types of reading ought we to give to children? There has been within recent months an almost frantic and at times hysterical attempt on the part of educators to justify their work in terms of the war effort. So widespread has it become that one would not be surprised at all to find a perfectly serious monograph devoted to the place of *Little Black Sambo* in preparing kindergartners for jungle warfare—or to the use of *Loopy* in pre-flight courses in the first grade. Whether *Peter Rabbit* as seen in the light of Victory gardens will be allowed to remain on reading lists is open to question. But it is no laughing matter. If there is any hope for the future, the children of the present must have the heritage of the past. We have no right to deprive them of that—for childhood is too brief. The best that we adults can offer them in these days of stress is the haven and the security of as normal a childhood as possible. They are cognizant enough of the war. Fathers and brothers are in service; mothers are in defense plants. Every school has within its program a place for the child's share in the war effort. But if they are to take their place in the post-war world, they must have had all the best that the pre-war world could have given them. Then they in turn may give to childhood the books which endure.

They must have books of courage—the Greek heroes and the Norse, Crusaders and explorers, men who led their countries in peace as well as in war; they must find the quieter courage of such men as Saint Francis and Father Damien, the courage which it takes to believe in music and in art, and such courage

as we find in the boy who faced the terror of the sea in *Call It Courage*, or of the high school boy in *All American*. And because courage is not lacking today, we will want such books as *The Courage and the Glory*.

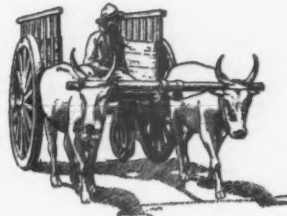
And there must be books for joy and for fun; for laughter is a staff on which to lean. They should know the Peterkin family and Tyll Ulenspiegel; *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins* and *Mr. Popper's Penguins*, *The Cautious Carp*, *Susie Mariar*, and *Little Toot*, the poetry of Lear and Carroll and Milne, and all the other books which are full of chuckles and giggles and fun.

And whatever else we relinquish, it must not be the realm of imagination. Children will enter it in spite of us, though why anyone should wish to stay their feet is difficult to understand. From a class in children's literature came a reminiscence which is such conclusive proof that it tells the whole story. A father who earnestly believed that the world of reality was sufficient for his children refused to let them have fairy tales to read. But that made no difference at all; for day after day they set sail on the flower-bordered green carpet of the parlour. They were mermaids with enchanted gardens under the sea, and all the land of faerie was theirs. Imagination is in the roots of the race. We have no right to take it from a child. Indeed, we could not do it if we would; for deprived of Grimm and Perrault, of Andersen and Jacobs, and all the others, he will create his own imaginative tale. How much better, then, to give him all of these—to let him know some of the later arrivals to fairy land—the *Hobbit* who went adventuring in search of dragon gold, and *Mary Poppins* that most unfairylike of fairies with whom such incredibly wonderful things can happen.

The adult reasoning that such books will keep children from knowing truth when they meet it is evidence of the adult's inability to keep pace with the child's mind. Certainly there should be such scientific books as *Up Above and Down Below* which pictures so delightfully the roots of trees and plants. But there should also be that lovely picture book *When the Root Children Wake Up*. Nor do I

find it easy to believe that the child who has loved *Doctor Dolittle* or *The Wind in the Willows* will fail to appreciate *Lassie Come Home* or *My Friend Flicka* just because in some of his readings animals could talk.

There will be books on science and history and crafts, on aviation and cooking and magic. There will be more books as worthy of their subject as are *Mei Li* and *The Cottage at Bantry Bay*. We can hope that such as *Here Is Alaska* will be a measuring stick for books



From *Picture Map Geography of Mexico* (Stokes)

on people far or near. And, of course, there will be poetry. As one little girl said: "I want a book with words that match." For poetry above all else goes singing with us, up hill and down.

But all that has been said means little unless we read and read and read, comparing the old with the new, weighing the dog-eared, battered book against the title fresh from the printer—for we are all over-susceptible to the uncut page. We cannot select books for children if we retreat to an academic tower which has no door by which a child may enter, nor can we evaluate them if our own maturity is not deepened by contact with the best in adult literature. It is a happy road to travel—this one which goes with the child from picture book and nursery rhyme to the vast horizons of all knowledge. How better could one travel it than to ask that Ella Young share with us the road-blessing of the Gubbaun Saor:

"My blessing on the road that is smooth," said the Gubbaun, "and on the rough road through the quagmire. A blessing on night with the stars; and night when the stars are quenched. A blessing on the clear sky of day; and day that is choked with thunder. May my blessing run before you. May my blessing guard you on the right hand and on the left. May my blessing follow you as your shadow follows. Take my road blessing."

Children's Reading and the War

ELOISE RUE*

At the very moment when the request to write this article came, a seventh grade boy was looking over the war stories. This boy wanted books like *Thumbs Up!*¹ and *Hurricane Yank*,² by Montgomery. Such hurriedly written, exciting tales will be bought, read avidly by boys who might otherwise be non-readers, and by the time they have worn out, many of these books will have been replaced by other titles. *Thumbs Up!* is the story of three young aviators in the South Pacific, beginning in December, 1941, while *Hurricane Yank* is a tale of an American football star with the R.A.F. Kummer's *Perilous Island*³ has a highly improbable plot but the timely background of the Aleutian Islands. Like Montgomery, Kummer has done far better writing in other books.

We also classify among this light popular type of fiction Bechdolt's *Junior Air Raid Wardens*,⁴ a story of two sixteen-year-old boys who aid the U. S. Coast Guard in an Atlantic coast town, and Streatfield's *Stranger in Primrose Lane*,⁵ a story of several English children and a German spy. Another spy story is Meader's *Shadow In The Pines*,⁶ in which a fifteen year old boy living near Fort Dix, N. J., helps an army intelligence officer round up Nazi Fifth columnists, while Meader's latest title, *The Sea Snake*,⁷ concerns a German submarine and the sixteen-year-old son of a Carolina fisherman who helps the U. S. Navy obtain important information and accomplish the destruction of the submarine. Meader has not tried to turn out books quite so fast and his style suffers less. Mr. Felsen, a new author, has been doing some interesting war stories for boys. *Navy Diver*⁸ has lots of action and is particularly valuable for its presentation of a loyal Japanese American, and just recently his *Submarine Sailor*,⁹ a story of the South Pacific, has come from the press. It includes a photographic supplement of official navy pictures.

In this lighter type of fiction are books about the home front, such as *Roll Out the Tanks*,¹⁰ by McGaughey and *Swing Shift*,¹¹

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by Brier. In a setting of a Detroit automobile factory which now turns out tanks, McGaughey pictures the assembly line and sabotage, and features young Dick Kennedy, a boy with ideas. Regrettably, Brier's tale of the shipyard in Seattle also centers around a Horatio Alger hero, eighteen-year-old Dave Marshall from Dakota. His advancement from molding loft to supply contact man is a little too rapid, but we do get a picture of the industry, plus mystery and sabotage. There is nothing harmful in these books and they do have a present value.



From *America's Fighting Planes*. (Macmillan).

For girls, we have Mrs. Peckham's *Other People's Children*¹² which follows June Burke, who loves children, through two years of nursery school in New York, where she earns her way by acting as governess. As the story ends she is ready for a new job caring for children of war workers. *War Wings for Carol*,¹³ by O'Malley, the third book in a series, shows our heroine, a former airline stewardess, in a more responsible job, as assistant to the manager of an important New England airport.

Children are anxious to read fiction about the specific services. Stansbury has written

about the WACS in *Bars on Her Shoulders*,¹⁴ while for boys, there is Riesenbergs's tale of the merchant marine, *Salvage*,¹⁵ and Bell's *Coast Guard Cadets*,¹⁶ a story of the U. S. Coast Guard Academy, packed with information and illustrated with official U. S. Coast Guard photographs.

Horse lovers will read *Top Kick, U. S. Army Horse*,¹⁷ by Watson, long after the war is over, but it is particularly interesting now because the last few chapters concern the Philippine campaign of the present war. Mr. Lent has given us three informational stories: *Air Patrol*,¹⁸ in which Jim Brewster flies for the U. S. Coast Guard, *Aviation Cadet*,¹⁹ in which Dick Hilton wins his wings at Pensacola, and *Bombardier*,²⁰ in which Tom Dixon wins his wings with the bomber command. Intelligent air-mindedness is developed, information is authentic, photographs excellent and usually official, although the plots are on the Alger side.

When we come to informational books in demand, the emphasis is particularly on the aeronautical side and hence more worthy books in this category have appeared. Of the general informational type, the best illustrated and most useful are Paul Brown's *Insignia of the Services*,²¹ which in the newest edition now include the Wacs, Waves, and Spars; and Peet's *Defending America*.²²

In the aviation field, we have Kinert's *America's Fighting Planes in Action*,²³ the latest and one of the best, Law's *Fighting Planes of the World*,²⁴ new revised edition, with colored illustrations and brief text, Booth's *Book of Modern Warplanes*,²⁵ a collection of paintings of the world's latest fighting aircraft, both Allied and Axis, with a brief description of each type, Walker's *War in the Air*,²⁶ fighting planes and pilots in action, and Ayling's *Flying Furies*.²⁷ These titles have practically no age "ceiling" or "floor." Children who can scarcely read often borrow them to pore over and study the bright colored pictures. More specialized are Winston's *Aircraft Carriers*,²⁸ Ott's *Aircraft Spotter*,²⁹ new edition, which gives photographs, silhouettes and descriptions of many Allied and Axis planes for professional and amateur use, Leyson's *Wings for Offense*,³⁰ telling about the planes and the training of men for the U. S. air forces, in-

cluding paratroops and anti-aircraft defenses, Collison's *Flying Fortress*,³¹ the story of the Boeing bomber, with many excellent photographs and considerable reading matter, and Zim's *Parachutes*³² and *Air Navigation*.³³ Mr. Zim is a science teacher with a style suitable



for either adults or children. In addition to these two books he has also written *Submarines*,³⁴ the story of undersea boats, with the historical development, mechanism, and training for service. A good, but less complete and less expensive title, is *Submarine!*,³⁵ the story of undersea fighters, by Banning.

Lieutenant Ewert has written *The United States Army*,³⁶ a large flat book, with insignia and thumb nail sketches in the margins. It presents organization and training in non-technical style. Gilmore's *How To Build A Model Navy*³⁷ includes a short history of our navy, sketches of the flags and uniforms, as well as photographs and diagrams for building both historical and modern ships of the U. S. Navy. Rimington's *Fighting Fleets*³⁸ has been called "a poor man's 'Jane's Fighting Ships'" and Floherty's *Youth and The Sea*³⁹ shows us the training of cadets in the maritime service schools of the American Merchant Marine.

The breakdown of age groups in the demand for aviation books is doubly noticeable in the requests of the junior high age group, particularly boys. Many want the documentary type of books and nothing else, realistic beyond their years as these books may seem. The most popular have been: Donahue's *Tally-Ho! Yankee in a Spitfire*,⁴⁰ about an American boy who joined the R.A.F. as a fighter pilot;

Johnston's thrilling piece of news reporting, *Queen of the Flattops*,⁴¹ the U.S.S. Lexington and the Coral Sea battle; *The Raft*,⁴² Trumbull's story of three American navy fliers lost in the Pacific, who spent thirty-four days adrift and went 1,000 miles in an 8 ft. by 4 ft. rubber boat; *Bombs Away*,⁴³ the story of a bomber team, written for the U. S. Army Air Forces by John Steinbeck. It takes six boys from civilian life through training school, and is interesting and well done, even though it is obviously recruiting propaganda; *The Flying Tigers*,⁴⁴ well told by Whelen, the story of the American Volunteer Group in China, of their achievements from December 1941 through July 1942; *They Were Expendable*⁴⁵ and *Queens Die Proudly*,⁴⁶ by W. L. White, the first about the Motor Torpedo Boats in the Philippine campaign, the second about the Flying Fortresses in the South Seas; *Flying Guns*,⁴⁷ cockpit record of a naval pilot from Pearl Harbor through Midway, a true story of courage, endurance and resourcefulness, by Dickinson and Sparkes.

If children are to be introduced to adult responsibilities at an earlier age, there is no reason why they should not have this documentary evidence of the world in which they are growing up, when they demand it.

Many of the boys and girls who do not read these adult books in full ask for the shorter accounts. For the younger ones there is Edward Shenton's *On Wings for Freedom*,⁴⁸ short stories of American heroes in encounters from Pearl Harbor through Midway; for the slightly older group, Floherty's *Courage and the Glory*,⁴⁹ thrilling accounts of the bravery of such heroes as Bulkeley, Wermuth, Colin Kelly and Gen. MacArthur. More complete still is Holbrook's *None More Courageous*,⁵⁰ American war heroes of today.

The younger children have not been forgotten in the production of war literature. For the preschool children and beginning readers there are picture story books entitled *Soldier Sammy*⁵¹ and *Sailor Jack*⁵² by MacNeil, and *Bobo, the Barrage Balloon*,⁵³ an exciting Disney-like picture book by McConnell. The home front is emphasized in Lois Lenski's *Little Farmer*,⁵⁴ another Mr. Small book; in Miss Milhous's charming *Corporal Keeper-upper*,⁵⁵ a morale builder; in Rey's *Tommy*

Help Too,⁵⁶ a toy book with a scrap collection theme; and certainly Dorothea Gould's *Very First Aid*⁵⁷ and *Very First Garden*⁵⁸ were meant to bolster up the home front. In Inez Hogan's *Monkey Twins*,⁵⁹ the African animals organize for safety and quell rumors. The whole story is an instrument for explaining a wartime vocabulary to children. Mrs. Sherman's *Admiral Wags*⁶⁰ gives us a dog story for the third to fifth graders about the mascot of the U.S.S. Lexington, and Munro Leaf's *War-Time Handbook for Young Americans*⁶¹ emphasizes service and cooperation.

The war has brought to us a consciousness of other geographic backgrounds, which is reflected in both text and trade books which will enrich the curriculum. Latin America is a field in itself and all teachers should familiarize themselves with the excellent bibliographies published by the Office of Education entitled: *Our Neighbor Republics*,⁶² *Industries, Products and Transportation in Our Neighbor Republics*,⁶³ and *Arts, Crafts and Customs of Our Neighbor Republics*.⁶⁴

We have three new titles on lesser known regions important in the news today: *Islands on Guard*,⁶⁵ information on the lesser Antilles and Caribbean, and *Ocean Outposts*⁶⁶ in the Pacific, both by Helen Follett, and the excellent and interesting *Here Is Alaska*,⁶⁷ by Evelyn Stefansson. These have rather too fine print, but good maps and excellent photographs. They will be most useful in junior high.

We have a new awareness of our own country and its various regions and aspects as reflected in geographical material, biographical material, historical fiction, and stories of children in different states. In all of these the principles of democracy, both in their own lives and in the striving of their ancestors, make children conscious of the heritage of liberty for which we are fighting today.

One of the best of these books is *From Sea To Shining Sea*,⁶⁸ by Dyett, which shows the United States in photographs, at work and at play, in country and city, at peace and at war. Probably the most useful in the middle grades, this well arranged volume has no definite age limit. As a history text Gertrude Hartman's *Making Of a Democracy*⁶⁹ is an excellent example of new trends.

Mrs. Sterne's *America Was Like This*⁷⁰ contains six short stories with backgrounds of important eras in American history. Kummer's *Torch Of Liberty*⁷¹ gives fourteen episodes from the Greeks to Dunkirk, showing the struggle for freedom, with interludes by the Spirit of Liberty. Both of these collections might be introduced to children by reading aloud.

There is also a wealth of other material, much of it fictional, which has more significance than just war and adventure, but which often needs to be introduced to children. *All-American*,⁷² by Tunis, deals not only with football, but with race prejudice and democracy in sport, certainly problems we must deal with in post-war reconstruction. The inimitable fable by Wolo, *The Secret Of The Ancient Oak*,⁷³ pictures several families of animals who, just in time, learn to cooperate against their common enemy. Younger children grasp the underlying idea of cooperation immediately, but the idea that it parallels the world situation today is not always apprehended at the first reading.

Just off the press is Robert Lawson's *Watchwords Of Liberty*,⁷⁴ a pageant of American quotations, in which the author-illustrator has accompanied each quotation with vigorous illustrations and short historical accounts. By arranging them chronologically, he has compiled a history of our democracy.

The problem of refugee children has been well presented to younger readers in *Primrose Day*,⁷⁵ the story of the adjustment of an English second grader to American ways, written by that chronicler of second grade life, Carolyn Haywood. Babette Deutsch has written of a boys' school in New York City and of a home for refugee children. This story of tolerance, revolving around Ernst and Erica Keller and the American boy Thursty, is called *The Welcome*,⁷⁷ after the refuge home. Barne's *We'll Meet In England*⁷⁸ tells of two Norwegian children escaping by boat to England with the help of an English sailor.

Other books which will be read by the more serious children and can be presented in an interesting way or read aloud by teachers are those stories of children in other allied countries at war. We have Lattimore's *Ques-*

tions of Lifu,⁷⁹ a story of China, about a small boy who sets out to find his soldier father, and for older children, Mrs. Lewis's sympathetic *When the Typhoon Blows*,⁸⁰ about a courageous Chinese boy and his aged grandfather. *The Wishing Window*,⁸¹ by Flexner, is about



From *The Wishing Window* (Stokes).

two French refugee children, a French bakery, a cat, and an air raid. It brings the war very close, but the realism is so well handled one need not fear presenting the story to younger children. Gronowicz's story of *Bolek*,⁸² a young Polish violinist who escapes to America, has been translated into English. *White Stars of Freedom*,⁸³ by Isasi and Denny, tells of a boy and his family and friends in the beautiful Basque country, with war clouds fast approaching. He is evacuated to this country and by December 1941 he is twenty-one and takes the oath of loyalty as an American citizen. These two stories may seem to drag in spots, but they show a loyalty to the old country and to the new, to the principles of democracy, which make them valuable.

For the younger children, there is Theresa Kalab's *Watching For Winkie*,⁸⁴ in which a Scotch boy and his carrier pigeon help save four members of a bomber crew. *Left Till Called For*,⁸⁵ by Treadgold, is the story of several families of English children and their pony club. When the Nazis take over the channel island on which they live, a brother and sister are accidentally left behind. *Snow Treasure*⁸⁶ by McSwigan is a tense story of courage shown by children in occupied Norway in helping to get some of their country's gold aboard a ship, United States bound. It is based on fact. *Wings For Nikias*,⁸⁷ a story of the Greece of today, by Blackstock, shows a love of Greece and its history and of the airplane. Nikias saves a regiment by carrying a message, and earns an airplane trip. Russia is represented by Mr. Felsen's *Struggle Is Our Brother*⁸⁸ in which Mikhail, a Cossack boy,

and other guerillas, play an important part after the Germans invade the Ukraine. While not literary and a bit too realistic for an over-sensitive child, it has a place among our books for older children since it is practically the only thing on modern Russia we have for them.

The patriotic angle has not been overlooked by the authors and publishers. *Long May It Wave*,⁸⁹ by Thomas, the story of the flag, is one of the best and has many pictures in color. Three song books are worth mentioning in this connection: *Stories Of Our American Patriotic Songs*,⁹⁰ by Lyons, gives music, text, and history of ten songs; Davison's *Songs Of Freedom*⁹¹ gives songs of America and her allies; and Carl Carmer's *America Sings*,⁹² stories and songs of our country's growing, tells tall tales of American beginnings with folk songs and colored illustrations.

We have seen that there is an abundance of war reading material for children. We encounter no difficulty in getting children to read the more exciting fiction or the aviation books. Should it not be a challenge to us then to take advantage of their interests and introduce them to books picturing the home life and war efforts of our democratic allies and to those emphasizing the democratic principles for which we are all striving? These will help give them understanding and tolerance of the peoples and problems of our post-war world.

- ¹ McKay, 1942, \$2.00
- ² McKay, 1942, \$2.00
- ³ Winston, 1942, \$2.00
- ⁴ Lippincott, 1942, \$1.75
- ⁵ Random, 1941, \$2.00
- ⁶ Harcourt, 1942, \$2.00
- ⁷ Harcourt, 1943, \$2.00
- ⁸ Dutton, 1942, \$2.00
- ⁹ Dutton, 1943, \$2.50
- ¹⁰ Macrae-Smith, 1942, \$2.00
- ¹¹ Random, 1943, \$2.00
- ¹² Nelson, 1943, \$2.00
- ¹³ Dodd, 1943, \$2.00
- ¹⁴ Dodd, 1943, \$2.00
- ¹⁵ Dodd, 1942, \$2.00
- ¹⁶ Dodd, 1941, \$2.00
- ¹⁷ Houghton, 1942, \$2.00
- ¹⁸ Macmillan, 1942, \$2.00
- ¹⁹ Macmillan, 1942, \$1.75
- ²⁰ Macmillan, 1943, \$2.00
- ²¹ Scribner, 1943, \$1.50 new ed.
- ²² Harper, 1941, \$1.50
- ²³ Macmillan, 1943, \$2.50
- ²⁴ Random, 1942, \$1.00

- ²⁵ Garden City, 1942, \$1.00
- ²⁶ Random, 1941, \$1.00
- ²⁷ Nelson, 1942, \$1.50
- ²⁸ Harper, 1942, \$2.00
- ²⁹ Harcourt, 1943, \$1.00 pa. new ed.
- ³⁰ Dutton, 1942, \$2.50
- ³¹ Scribner, 1943, \$2.50
- ³² Harcourt, 1942, \$2.50
- ³³ Harcourt, 1943, \$3.00
- ³⁴ Harcourt, 1942, \$3.00
- ³⁵ Rand, 1942, \$1.00
- ³⁶ Little, 1941, \$1.25
- ³⁷ Dodd, 1941, \$2.50
- ³⁸ Dodd, 1943, \$3.00 new ed.
- ³⁹ Lippincott, 1942, \$2.00
- ⁴⁰ Macmillan, 1941, \$2.50
- ⁴¹ Dutton, 1942, \$3.00
- ⁴² Holt, 1942, \$2.50
- ⁴³ Viking, 1942, \$2.50
- ⁴⁴ Viking, 1942, \$2.50
- ⁴⁵ Harcourt, 1942, \$2.00
- ⁴⁶ Harcourt, 1943, \$2.50
- ⁴⁷ Scribner, 1942, \$2.00
- ⁴⁸ Macrae-Smith, 1942, \$2.00
- ⁴⁹ Lippincott, 1942, \$2.25
- ⁵⁰ Macmillan, 1942, \$2.50
- ⁵¹ Oxford, 1942, \$1.00
- ⁵² Oxford, 1942, \$1.00
- ⁵³ Lothrop, 1943, \$1.50
- ⁵⁴ Oxford, 1942, 75c.
- ⁵⁵ Scribner, 1943, \$1.00
- ⁵⁶ Houghton, 1943, \$1.00 pa.
- ⁵⁷ Oxford, 1942, 50c.
- ⁵⁸ Oxford, 1943, 50c.
- ⁵⁹ Dutton, 1943, \$1.00
- ⁶⁰ Dodd, 1943, \$2.00
- ⁶¹ Stokes, 1942, \$1.25
- ⁶² 1942, 15c. pa.
- ⁶³ 1942, 15c. pa.
- ⁶⁴ 1942, 15c. pa.
- ⁶⁵ Scribner, 1943, \$2.50
- ⁶⁶ Scribner, 1943, \$2.00 rev. ed.
- ⁶⁷ Scribner, 1943, \$2.50
- ⁶⁸ Oxford, 1943, \$2.50
- ⁶⁹ Day, 1941, \$1.96, rev. and enl. ed.
- ⁷⁰ Dodd, 1941, \$2.00
- ⁷¹ Winston, 1941, \$2.00
- ⁷² Harcourt, 1942, \$2.00
- ⁷³ Morrow, 1942, \$2.00
- ⁷⁴ Little, 1943, \$2.00
- ⁷⁵ Harcourt, 1942, \$2.00
- ⁷⁶ Harper, 1942, \$2.00
- ⁷⁷ Dodd, 1943, \$2.00
- ⁷⁸ Harcourt, 1942, \$2.00
- ⁷⁹ Winston, 1942, \$2.00
- ⁸⁰ Stokes, 1942, \$1.50
- ⁸¹ Nelson, 1942, \$2.50
- ⁸² A. Whitman, 1942, \$2.50
- ⁸³ Longmans, 1942, \$1.75
- ⁸⁴ Doubleday, 1941, \$2.00
- ⁸⁵ Dutton, 1942, \$2.00
- ⁸⁶ Putnam, 1942, \$2.00
- ⁸⁷ Dutton, 1943, \$2.00
- ⁸⁸ Morrow, 1941, \$2.00
- ⁸⁹ Vanguard, 1942, \$1.50
- ⁹⁰ Houghton, 1942, \$1.75, school ed. 96c.
- ⁹¹ Knopf, 1942, \$3.00

Children's Books on the Negro: To Help Build a Better World

CHARLEMAE ROLLINS¹

President Roosevelt has said, "Books are weapons in the war of ideas." The intellectual weapons which young people, Negro and white, need to fight the tenseness and bitterness caused by the war, are those books which give an insight into the emotions and feelings, the ideals and traditions of the other peoples with whom they must live.

Our highest hopes are in our children; they can be given the power to build a better world. Any teacher who accepts the opportunity of presenting these books to children faces a tremendous responsibility. Children as they are growing up need special interpretations of the lives of other peoples, but they must be helped to an understanding and tolerance. They cannot develop these qualities through contacts with others, if those closest to them are prejudiced and unsympathetic with other races or groups. Tolerance and understanding *can* be gained through reading the right books!

Children's books of an earlier day, when including Negroes as characters, followed a stereotyped pattern. The scene was generally laid on a plantation and the Negroes were a kind of comic relief. The family presented usually consisted of a shiftless father, dependent upon the meager earnings of an overworked mother, or one resourceful child. The illustrations were caricatures of Negro children, exaggerated and ugly. Dialect at its worst was unreadable, at its mildest, merely exaggerated and ungrammatical.

Some authors seem to feel a nostalgic yearning for a "glorious past" of slavery time when the Negro knew his place. They regret that the old "darkey" types are disappearing and feel that they should preserve them in books for children of today. Yet books of this type do nothing to help create democratic attitudes; they are more apt to destroy the child's con-

cept of the Negro who sits beside him at school or plays with him on the playground, by substituting a false picture of his background or actual life.

Some authors and also too many publishers still seem to feel that Negroes should be "naive, quaint and picturesque," and that only such types are colorful enough to make good copy. Regrettably, such books are written and illustrated by top-notch writers and artists and included in lists used as guides by those teachers and librarians who have no access to the books themselves before buying them.

It is gratifying to find this type of book being superseded by books of more varied phases of Negro life, illustrated with lifelike pictures of Negro children that are appealing and neither barefoot, ragged, nor unkempt. No Negro objects to the humorous presentation, when the pictures are real and the characters honestly portrayed. So many books, however, have treated him only as a comic character and have caricatured him in illustrations, that children have grown to resent this type of presentation.

Books Not Recommended—And Why

This appraisal is made from the Negro viewpoint. Many people cannot understand why Negroes feel as they do about certain books—why they reject them.

In order to help teachers select books which will neither antagonize their Negro pupils, nor give wrong or distorted concepts to white children, the following books have been annotated:

Inez Hogan is the creator of a character called *Nicodemus*; in the earlier books the boy was a sort of comic-strip character which the children said "wore too much lipstick." In *Nicodemus Runs Away*, she removed the lipstick and seemed to catch the flavor of Negro life which is humorous and appealing, and to which no Negro has any objections; but in

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Nicodemus Helps the Army, the earlier objections reoccurred. This was written to help promote the sale of War Stamps among children and was given a special award "for distinguished service in the war savings program," yet it seemed to defeat its democratic purpose by its condescending tone. The dialect is inconsistent—sometimes Nicodemus is ungrammatical; at others he speaks like any normal child. One of the chief characters is "Rastus," a name that carries with it the same sting as "nigger," "darkey," and "coon."

Saturday for Samuel, by Legrand Henderson, is the story of a family with an improvident and shiftless father who spends the meager earnings of the family for pink lemonade, ice cream, and other follies; and it ridicules the mother with an impossibly long name. The illustrations are not objectionable; and it is not written in dialect.

Parasols Is for Ladies, by Elizabeth Ritter, is a wholesome story of three little Negro girls; but Negro children object to the ungrammatical title of the book, and the grotesque illustrations distress them. As one child said, "Nobody in the world is that ugly." And a parent, with more astuteness, remarked, "They are not even anatomically correct."

Jump Lively Jeff, by Ada C. Darby, is a badly written tale of poor Negroes in the period following the War between the States. It is written in dialect and sprinkled liberally with the words "nigger," "darkey," and "coon." Negro children show their resentment of such words by inking them out or cutting the pages to remove the words; and they show their feelings about caricature-illustrations by writing on them, "Looks like someone I know," and often label the pictures with names of other children.

Emphasis on the shiftlessness of the Negro colors some of the collections of folktales. *John Henry*, by James Cloyd Bowman, a legendary hero, is similar to "Paul Bunyan" and "Pecos Bill;" John Henry is a "great steel-drivin' man," who goes in search of his sweetheart but finds instead lazy, indolent roustabouts who are uncertain and confused about their newly acquired freedom. Although he "dies with his hammer in his hand," he is not the hero that Olive B. Miller presents in her

Heroes, Outlaws, and Funny Fellows, which is sympathetic in its one story about John Henry.

There are some books which create unwholesome impressions of children who are unfamiliar with Negroes. Kathryn Worth's *Middle Button*, a well-written career story for older girls, contains a scene in which the doctor tells the heroine (see page 123) "Don't wash them any more, Maggie. You might give them pneumonia. Niggers are accustomed to dirt on their outsides. Though goodness knows why we should try to keep harm from coming to their eyes. They'll never learn to read in their lives."

Christine Govan's plantation story, *Carolina Caravan*, opens with this sentence, "Caroline Embree, ten years old, and 'black as the ace of spades' was frying potatoes." A Negro girl reading such an opening would be so antagonized that she would read no further.

Teachers and librarians must watch, too, for implications in children's books with Negroes as minor characters. In Elizabeth Coatsworth's *White Horse*, a story of a white child who is kidnapped and taken to an Egyptian harem, the beautiful white girl is kind and generous, but the black girl, who is equally beautiful, is cunning and cruel; the implication is that these are typical traits of black people. *You Shall Have a Carriage* pictures Negroes as childish and hopelessly incompetent, and superstitious in a manner that is neither understanding of real Negro character, nor helpful in creating good race relations in a time when every such interpretation creates more bitterness.

Recommended Books

Some of the outstanding books for children of the elementary grades which teachers can use freely, knowing they give interpretations of Negro life and character of which the majority of Negro librarians and teachers approve, and which children really enjoy, are annotated below:

Tobe, by Stella G. Sharpe, is for the youngest children, for whom illustrations play the most important part in the book. These illustrations are photographs of a farm family, and is a true picture of such a life. The story, too, is wholesome and well-liked by the children.

Eva Knox Evans has given all children a glimpse into real Negro life in her honest and lively accounts of *Araminta*, *Jerome Anthony*, and other tales. The children are done in a warm brown color in humorous but realistic illustrations by Erick Berry.

Hezekiah Horton, by Ellen Terry, a Negro author, tells of a little boy in Harlem who wishes for an automobile—and gets a ride, which is the next-best-thing from a child's point of view.

Steppin and Family, by Hope Newell, is also a picture of Negro life in Harlem. The hero, a boy, longs to become a great dancer, and his idol is Bill Robinson. The wholesome quality of this city family is unforgettable.

Uncle Bouqui of Haiti, by Harold Courlander, in a collection of folk tales of Haiti, beautifully illustrated by Lucy Crockett, has a true flavor of the island. Uncle Bouqui is kindly and simple-hearted; and his friend, who constantly outwits him, Ti Malice, is crafty and unscrupulous.

Journey Cake, by Isabel McMeekin, is the story of Juba, a "free woman of color," and six motherless white children whom she leads safely through the Kentucky wilderness. The dialect in this book is an excellent example of what can be done with the flavor of speech typical of a time and place. The characters are real, and though this is a plantation story, the people are presented with dignity and without condescension. These last three books are for the upper grades.

Three biographies recommended for the teacher are Rackham Holt's *George Washington Carver*, the story of the great Negro scientist, whose life at Tuskegee and whose friendship with Booker T. Washington is sympathetically handled; *Angel Mo' and Her Son*, *Roland Hayes*, by McKinley Helm, is a fine story of the great tenor, and includes much interpretive material on Negro music; *Big Ben*, by Earl Miers, is a fictionalized biography of Paul Robeson and his experience at Rutgers.

Very important are the books which build more meaningful concepts of the relations between the races. Most important among recent books of this type is John Tunis' *All-American*, written for older children about a



From John R. Tunis, *All-American*. (Harcourt-Brace).

white boy's effort to face racial intolerance not only as it affected a Negro boy, but also a Jewish boy, in his high school.

Majorie Fischer's Palaces on Monday is an account of two children traveling in Russia. They meet and make friends with a little black boy and learn to like him.

Kate Seredy's translation of Gedo's *Who is Johnny* is about a Negro boy born in Hungary, and here again the problem of race relations is handled wholesomely.

The cultural contributions of the Negro will give one insight into their emotions and feelings, their ideals and traditions, and is a great help in understanding them. One of the easiest approaches is through the study of the Negro's poetry and music. Arna Bontemps' *Golden Slippers* is readable and a distinguished contribution to American anthologies. Paul Lawrence Dunbar's *Little Brown Baby* contains old and familiar material, but it is a great favorite with the children. Langston Hughes has collected poems for older children in his *Dream Keeper*. *My Spirituals*, by Eva Jessye, are songs which she heard as a child in Kansas; they are suitable for older children to sing.

Teachers of elementary children, in laying the foundation for attitudes of tolerance, must be aware of the material presented in histories and books of the social sciences. *An Elementary History of America*, by Merl Eppes, *Negro Makers of History*, by Carl G. Woodson, and *A Child's History of the Negro*, by Jane Shackelford, are excellent supplements to the many American histories which ignore or overlook the Negro's contribution to American culture.

How to Evaluate Books About Other Races

When choosing books about any other peoples for children, and this means racial, cultural, or other alien groups, a teacher must ask herself certain questions:

Does this book or story portray the true characteristics of the people? Or does it present a distorted viewpoint?

Is this a true picture of life as a whole? Is it merely a nostalgic yearning for a romantic kind of experience which merely distorts the present?

Are the illustrations true to life? Or do they caricature or ridicule the race or group they represent?

Do the characters speak in a language true to the period or section in which they live? Or is it a dialect that is overdrawn or inconsistent? Is it too hard in spelling or form for the average child reader to follow easily?

Does the story give a broader understanding of the democratic way of life? Or is it patronizing and condescending in stressing differences of class, race, or religion?

A LIST OF BOOKS, GRADED FOR REFERENCE

For The Primary Grades

Blumberg, F.	
Rowena, Teena, Tot and the Blackberries	
Whitman Pub. Co.	\$1.00
Blumberg, F.	
Rowena, Teena, Tot and the Runaway Turkey	
Whitman Pub. Co.	1.00
Credle, E.	
The Flop-Eared Hound	
Oxford Press	2.00
Credle, E.	
Little Jeems Henry	
Thos. Nelson Co.	1.50
Dunbar, Paul	
Little Brown Baby	
Dodd, Mead Co.	1.50
Evans, E. K.	
Araminta	
Minton	2.00
Evans, E. K.	
Jerome Anthony	
G. Putman Sons	2.00
Price, P.	
Bantu Tales	
Dutton	1.50
Sharpe, S. G.	
Tobe	
Univ. of N. C. Press	1.00
Tary, E.	
Hezekiah Horton	
Viking Press	1.00

For The Middle Grades

Berry, E.	
Girls in Africa	
Macmillan	\$2.00
Bontemps, A.	
Sad-faced Boy	
Houghton Mifflin	2.00
Bontemps, A.	
You Can't Pet a Possum	
Houghton Mifflin	2.00
Bontemps, A. & Hughes, L.	
Popoo and Fifina	
Macmillan	1.50
Courlander, H.	
Uncle Bouqui of Haiti	
Morrow	2.00
Evans, E. K.	
Key Corner	
Putman & Sons	2.00
Gedo, L.	
Who is Johnny?	
Viking Press	2.00
Jackson	
A Boy's Life of Booker T. Washington	
Lattimore, E.	
Junior, a Colored Boy of Charleston	
Harcourt Brace	2.00
Newell, H.	
Steppin and Family	
Oxford	1.00

Nolen, E. W.		Eppse, M. R.	
Cherry Street House		An Elementary History of	
Thos. Nelson Co.	1.00	the United States	
Nolen, E. W.		Natl. Educa. Asso.	1.08
Job for Jeremiah		Fauset, A. F.	
Oxford Press	1.00	For Freedom	
Nolen, E. W.		Franklin Press	1.00
Shipment for Susannah		Hughes, L.	
Thos. Nelson & Co.	1.00	Dream Keeper	
Schackelford, J.		Knopf	2.00
A Child's Story of the Negro		McMeekin, I.	
Associated Pub.	1.65	Journey Cake	
White, W. C.		Messner	2.00
Mouseknees		Means, F. C.	
Random House	1.75	Shuttered Windows	
Whiting, H. A.		Houghton	2.00
Negro Art, Music and Rhyme		Newcomb, C.	
Associated Pub.	1.00	Black Fire	
Whiting, H. A.		Longmans	2.50
Negro Folk Tales		Ovington, M. W.	
Associated Pub.	1.00	Zeke	
<i>For The Upper Grades</i>		Harcourt Brace	1.50
Allee, M.		Swift, H.	
Great Tradition		Railroad for Freedom	
Houghton Mifflin	\$2.00	Harcourt Brace	2.50
Allee, M.		Tunis, J.	
Susanna and Tristram		All-American	
Houghton Mifflin	2.00	Harcourt Brace	2.00
Bontemps, A.		Woodson, C. G.	
Golden Slippers		Negro Makers of History	
Houghton Mifflin	2.50	Associated Pub.	3.00

Books for a Friendly World

ELLEN FROGNER*

Mary and John, who had been listening intensely to the adventures of the high-spirited, imaginative Prince Ivan, found the story of *The Firebird*¹ coming to an end: "Yet it is not in truth the end, for there is neither beginning nor end to this magic story. The sun rises again and again above the enchanted forest, and the birds go on singing in the magic orchard forever. Today the air is heavy with mist; tomorrow it is clear and as fresh as a draught of cool spring water. And somewhere, across the rolling forest, there is always a huntsman winding upon his horn. It is a young knight who has come riding over the hills from a faraway land. He stops beside a rustic gate and calls a white-haired peasant to the door of his cottage."

"'Old man! Whither leads the road where it falls off into the valley?'"

This insistent question of Prince Ivan in the Russian fairy tale and of youth everywhere is one which many, young and old, are asking today. Statesmen and laymen alike are offering plans for the world they would like to have after the war is over; people talk and write about a time when there will be a respect for human worth, when individuals will live well-adjusted lives in harmony, faith, and security, and when democracy will exist in intercultural relationships. How can elementary school teachers of reading and literature help make these ideas realities, since one of the most important factors to be considered is the education of children? Little will be gained

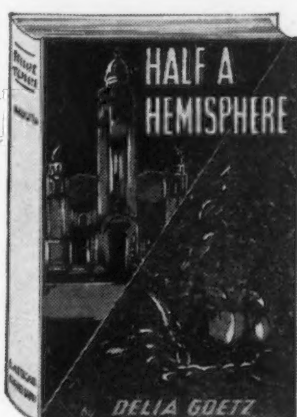


Courtesy of the American Library Association.

* Miss Frogner now teaches Methods in Reading and English at the University of Manitoba.

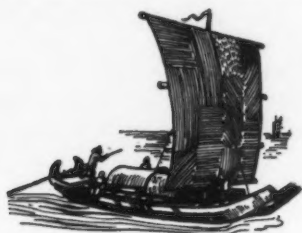
unless they are prepared to live in the world of tomorrow that we hope for; and not only to live in it, but with courageous imagination to carry worthy ideas still further.

Examining some of the possibilities we find such books as *Here Is Alaska*,² *Ocean Outposts*,³ *The Story of the Other America*,⁴ and the companion volumes *Neighbors to the South*⁵ and *Half a Hemisphere*⁶ among the



recent publications giving factual accounts of people and places in different parts of the world. The Institute of Pacific Relations has sponsored pamphlets valuable for advanced readers in the upper grades: "People of the China Seas,"⁷ "Lands Down Under,"⁸ "Changing China,"⁹ and "Land of the Soviets."¹⁰ Factual accounts like these are necessary for clear understanding and breadth of view, but so also are stories and other kinds of literature through which children can enter imaginatively and emotionally into the lives of people the world over (their own country not to be exempted).

Through the concrete experiences of individuals in stories, children can gain an understanding of the different ways in which people



From Sperry, *Bamboo* (Macmillan).

make their living. In showing the influence of a single kind of tree on the lives of people, Armstrong Sperry has two successful books for young children, *Bamboo*,¹¹ concerned with the activities of a Chinese boy, and *Coconut*,¹² which tells about a small boy on a South Sea island. *Panchita*¹³ pictures the growing of crops and the making of pottery in a poor but industrious Guatemalan family. Through *Panchita*'s first serious attempt at working with clay, the reader experiences something of the long hours of exacting work and the high standards of craftsmanship behind the successful making of pottery. *Children of America*¹⁴ helps American boys and girls get better acquainted with each other. In these short stories by various authors, the regional background is an important factor in determining both the work and the play of the characters. One of the stories, "Corn-belt Billy," is significant in the point made about differences, not only in ways of living but also in plans and aspirations. A New Hampshire boy could see no beauty in the farms of the Middle West and spoke of them contemptuously instead of trying to understand the point of view of Billy, who intended to make



From Sperry, *Coconut* (Macmillan).

farming his life work. The sting lasted until Billy, through several experiences, was again able to see beauty in the surrounding cornfields and appreciate their significance in American life.

Pearl Buck's recent book for youngsters, *The Chinese Children Next Door*,¹⁵ is very explicit about this question of differences,

especially in regard to customs. The author is telling her children a delightful story about the family who lived next door when she was a little girl in China. From the reactions of her children, she brings out how easy it is to think that anything different is necessarily wrong or laughable.

Intercultural Relations

Some books stimulate an appreciation of what the various cultural groups mean to all of us. Here might be mentioned books like *Up the Hill*¹⁶ and *Americans Every One*,¹⁷ or the pamphlet "We're All Americans,"¹⁸ published by the Council Against Intolerance in America. Biography also serves an important function. Among the several recent biographies of musicians there is one by Andre Maurois simply called *Chopin*,¹⁹ which reminds us how the musicians of Poland have helped keep alive this country "as gifted as it is unfortunate." Nansen,²⁰ a particularly timely biography, tells of how the Norwegian explorer gave up his own plans for further scientific research and exploration to lessen the suffering of countless people during the period after the first World War. Hardest of all was the struggle against prejudice, especially in the League of Nations. There is a definite challenge today in this book: "It is true that the great days of exploration are over; the last continent, the last ocean have been discovered; there are only a few places left on the globe where any explorer can say: 'I am the first to see this place,' but there seem to be no boundaries or dimensions to the other worlds in which Fridtjof Nansen helped blaze pathways, the world of science and the world of international brotherhood."

Another timely biographical book is Sigrid Undset's recent *Happy Times in Norway*,²¹ which was characterized in the *Saturday Review of Literature* as the "best anti-Fascist propaganda possible." The author relates the activities of her family during the three times of the year that mean much to all Norwegians—Christmas, the Seventeenth of May or Independence Day, and the summer vacation when for years people have gone to the mountains to secure grazing land for their cattle. Children will like little seven-year-old Hans; Anders, the warm-hearted adolescent, busy with sports and Scout activities; and Tulla,

the invalid sister, treated with tenderness by everyone. Although no mention is made in the main part of the book of the changes caused by the war, the whole picture is a powerful reminder that this life in "a place where human dignity and integrity were



From *Chopin* (Nelson).

cherished, where friendliness, happiness, and charity were considered the best things in life" no longer exists.

For younger children, *The Wishing Window*²² by Hortense Flexner shows a little of how the present war influences the lives of boys and girls in other countries. This story of two French children who had to leave their home is told simply and without any playing on emotions, but as Dorothy Canfield Fisher says in the foreword, it sets "the door leading from the children's room to reality at least ajar."

Since war and other influences result in broken homes in America too, it is important for children to read books that will keep before them the ideal of happy family life. Stories and biographies alike show how people the world over cherish this ideal. Examples of this are to be found in some of the books already mentioned about life in other countries, such as *Panchita*,¹³ *The Chinese Children Next Door*,¹⁵ and *Happy Times in Norway*,²¹ while for a picture of everyday life in a wholesome American family, *Pete*²³ would be one example. Others are to be found in books about present-day Indian life in America. *Little Navajo Bluebird*²⁴ is one of the several that show how

much home and the mother mean to these people. We see how Doli, the little girl in the story, feels about her home: "The hogan was clean and cool and quiet. Sunlight came in at the doorway and lay like a bright blanket on the sand of the floor. Mutton cooked over the coals in a big black pot. The hogan cat washed its face and shook out its whiskers to dry. Far away came the tinkle of the bell goat with the flock that Hobah herded slowly to the waterhole. Doli looked up at her mother. They smiled together, a quick little understanding smile that said, 'We are glad to be together in this hogan because it is beautiful and good.'"

Among the books about happy American homes is *Tobe*,²⁵ which portrays for young children a Negro family in comfortable circumstances. Another angle is seen in "Song to a Negro Wash-Woman" by Langston Hughes (found in *Golden Slippers*,²⁶ an anthology of Negro poetry especially for older children):

"I know how you send your children to school, and high school and even college."

"I know how you work to help your man when times are hard."

"I know how you build your house up from the washtub and call it home."

Sympathy For Human Struggle

It is important, then, that children not only have before them the ideal of wholesome home life, but also that they are sympathetic with the struggle that some people have to attain this ideal. Two quietly moving stories that picture children seriously concerned with this struggle are *Blue Willow*²⁷ and *A Tree for Peter*.²⁸ In the first book Janey Larkin, whose father is a migratory worker, hopes that some day they will be able to say, "We'll stay as long as we want to" instead of always, "As long as we can." *A Tree for Peter*²⁸ puts the reader into the situation of a little boy living in Shantytown, where there were close neighbors but "not one of them knew or cared what ill luck had forced the rest to live around a dump. They were too poor to care for anything but daily bread." This is a story also of courage kindled in a timid little boy through one man's friendliness.

Other books likewise show courage asserting itself, among them *Call It Courage*,²⁹

based on a Polynesian legend. Here Mafatu struggles to overcome his fear of the forces of nature. Nikias, the Greek boy in *Wings for Nikias*,³⁰ is another child who has to overcome fear. He is a shy boy who wants to be an aviator, but at the same time feels that he is not brave enough. The teacher tries to help Nikias by explaining that there are many kinds of courage, the hardest being that for which no drums play. When the war clouds break in Greece, Nikias asserts himself and by courage and ingenuity, within the possibilities for a young boy, saves the lives of soldiers in mountains near his home.

Courage and ingenuity of people defending their country in the present war are shown also in *When the Typhoon Blows*,³¹ a stirring picture of the Chinese, and *Struggle Is Our Brother*,³² a grim story of the valiant resistance of the Russians, told principally through the part played by a Cossack boy in guerrilla warfare and in the blowing up of the Amsov dam. For children somewhat younger, there is the popular *Snow Treasure*,³³ based on the true story of how children in Norway helped save nine million dollars of their country's gold by concealing it on their sleds as they coasted by the Nazis, later hiding it under snowmen where at night it was found by grown-ups and loaded on a freighter to be brought to America.

Sharing In Fun

Fortunately the adventures of people throughout the world are not always serious. Many children's books tell about lively everyday activities, sports, and fun with pets. Sharing in fun is one of the best ways of feeling acquainted. In *Totaram*,³⁴ children will find a friend in a ten-year-old boy of India. For older children, *White Stars of Freedom*³⁵ contains an unusually exciting chapter about the swift Basque game of pelta. Also for older children there are the popular American sports stories by John R. Tunis. One of these, *All-American*,³⁶ has an added significance in its message concerning the race problem.

Of the many good books about children and their pets, dog stories are especially popular. For young children there is *The Flop-eared Hound*,³⁷ about a Negro boy in North Carolina and his dog, while for those in upper grades, *White Stars of Freedom*³⁵ comes to

mind again, particularly in the absorbing chapter about the fight between a wild boar and Zuri, the little white dog. *Dirk's Dog Bello*³⁸ is a lively account of a poor boy in a fishing village on the island of Friesland and his dog Bello, a Great Dane that Dirk pulled out of the sea, salvaged from a shipwreck.

The Roots of Our Culture

Other types of literature are also significant in bringing home to children what Constance Rourke has called "the roots of American culture." Books like *An American ABC*,³⁹ *Growing Up with America*,⁴⁰ *Indian Captive*,⁴¹ and *Caddie Woodlawn*⁴² come to mind. Biographies are important in developing an appreciation of the people whose lives have gone into the making of America. An outstanding contribution is Robert Lawson's account of his parents and his grandparents presented in his usual lively style in *They Were Strong and Good*.⁴³ Much of the history of the United States comes into this slender picture book, not that these were famous people but rather that they came from different lands to take the part of common people in the development of this country—and they were strong and good. Other biographies such as *Haym Salomon, Son of Liberty*,⁴⁴ recreate for children individuals who made singular but often overlooked contributions. Among the biographies that add to the strength that some individuals already hold in the American tradition is the comparatively recent *Abraham Lincoln*⁴⁵ by Enid Meadowcroft, effective in its sincerity and directness. A unique biography is that of *George Washington's World*⁴⁶ by Genevieve Foster. Skillfully she does the difficult job of telling through both the text and the clever illustrations, what was happening in the rest of the world at different periods in Washington's life, for "even in George Washington's world, when travel and the spread of news depended upon sails and horses, events that happened in distant parts of the world had their effect upon one another and wove themselves into a single story."

In an age when science is used so much for destruction, it is fortunate that there are books giving children more than an incidental acquaintance with those who have used science for humanitarian purposes. Two of these, recent biographies for older children, show some-

thing of the development of medical science since the last part of the nineteenth century. *The Mayos*⁴⁷ brings out not only the contribution of these doctors in alleviating the suffering of people who came to them from many parts of the world, but also their endless search for knowledge, their provision for young doctors in the Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, and their belief, exemplified in their lives, that no person is big enough to be independent of others. The other biography, *Walter Reed, Doctor in Uniform*,⁴⁹ shows not only the sustained effort of Dr. Reed but also the sacrifices of those who submitted to the experimentation in order that the cause of yellow fever might be found. The far-reaching effect of their work is more than ever apparent today. Another recent biography for older children, *Sir Wilfred Grenfell*,⁴⁸ is a moving portrayal of the exuberant, self-reliant English doctor and his beneficial work among the Labrador fishermen.

Fantasy and Humor

There are other types of children's literature of importance today too; poetry with the opportunity provided for response to the emotions of others and enrichment of everyday living, and stories characterized especially by adventure, humor, and fantasy, furnishing a means of escape or a release from tension. Going to good literature to find these satisfactions is an essential habit to foster. In one or another of the books already mentioned, adventure and humor are to be found in varying amounts, while fantasy, of course, appears in folklore. For sheer hilarity, there are the picture books by Dr. Seuss, such as *And to Think that I Saw It on Mulberry Street*.⁵⁰ Probably few books have delighted young children as much as Robert McCloskey's *Make Way for Ducklings*,⁵¹ while for those older, Carl Sandburg's *Rootabaga Stories*⁵² similarly provides fun with the sound of words and humorous situations. There is amusement of another kind in recognizing the irony in a whole situation or in the author's phrasing. Certain of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales come to mind, especially the satires on insincerity and "pomp and circumstance," such as in "The Emperor's New Clothes" or in some of his neat phrases in "The Nightingale." In his own way, this writer of fairy tales is a spokesman for democracy.

Even this sampling of children's literature shows it clearly as a substantial body of world literature to which talented writers (and the same holds true for illustrators) as well as the

folk from different races and nationalities have contributed, and of this indebtedness, children should be strongly aware.

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|---|--|---|
| 1. Cooke, Donald E. | <i>The Firebird</i> | Winston, 1939. (5-8 Grade) |
| 2. Stefansson, Evelyn | <i>Here Is Alaska</i> | Scribners, 1943. (5-8) |
| 3. Follett, Helen | <i>Ocean Outposts</i> | Scribners, 1943. (5-8) |
| 4. Gill, Richard C. and Hoke, Helen | <i>The Story of the Other America</i> | Houghton Mifflin, 1941. (5-6) |
| 5. Goetz, Delia | <i>Neighbors to the South</i> | Harcourt, Brace, 1941. (5-8) |
| 6. Goetz, Delia | <i>Half a Hemisphere</i> | Harcourt, Brace, 1943. (5-8) |
| 7. Clark, Elizabeth C. | "People of the China Sea" | Webster, 1942. (8) |
| 8. Grattan, C. Hartley | "Lands Down Under" | Webster, 1943. (8) |
| 9. Taylor, George E. | "Changing China" | Webster, 1942. (8) |
| 10. Stewart Marguerite Ann | "Land of the Soviets" | Webster, 1942. (8) |
| 11. Sperry, Armstrong | <i>Bamboo</i> | Macmillan, 1942. (2-4) |
| 12. Sperry, Armstrong | <i>Coconut</i> | Macmillan, 1942. (2-4) |
| 13. Goetz, Delia | <i>Panchita</i> | Harcourt, Brace, 1941. (3-4) |
| 14. Nolen, Barbara | <i>Children of America</i> | Winston, 1939. (4-7) |
| 15. Buck, Pearl | <i>The Chinese Children Next Door</i> | John Day, 1942. (1-3) |
| 16. DeAngeli, Marguerite | <i>Up The Hill</i> | Doubleday, Doran, 1942. (4-6) |
| 17. Davis, Lavinia R. | <i>Americans Every One</i> | Doubleday, Doran, 1942. (3-5) |
| 18. | "We're All Americans" | Council Against Intolerance in America, 17 E. 42nd St., N. Y. (3-6) |
| 19. Maurois, Andre | <i>Frederic Chopin</i> | Nelson, 1943. (8) |
| 20. Hall, Anna Gertrude | <i>Nansen</i> | Viking, 1940. (8) |
| 21. Undset, Sigrid | <i>Happy Times in Norway</i> | Knopf, 1942. (7-8) |
| 22. Flexner, Hortense | <i>The Wishing Window</i> | Stokes, 1942. (2-4) |
| 23. Robinson, Tom | <i>Pete</i> | Viking, 1941. (3-5) |
| 24. Clark, Ann Nolan | <i>Little Navajo Bluebird</i> | Viking, 1943. (4-5) |
| 25. Sharpe, Stella Gentry | <i>Tobe</i> | University of North Carolina Press, 1939. (Kg-2) |
| 26. Bontemps, Arna | <i>Golden Slippers</i> | Harper, 1941. (6-8) |
| 27. Gates, Doris | <i>Blue Willow</i> | Viking, 1940. (4-6) |
| 28. Seredy, Kate | <i>A Tree For Peter</i> | Viking, 1941. (4-6) |
| 29. Sperry, Armstrong | <i>Call It Courage</i> | Macmillan, 1941. (5-8) |
| 30. Blackstock, Josephine | <i>Wings For Nikias</i> | Putnam, 1942. (6-8) |
| 31. Lewis, Elizabeth Foreman | <i>When The Typhoon Blows</i> | Winston, 1942. (7-8) |
| 32. Felsen, Gregor | <i>Struggle Is Our Brother</i> | Dutton, 1943. (7-9) |
| 33. McSwigan, Marie | <i>Snow Treasure</i> | Dutton, 1942. (4-7) |
| 34. Bose, Irene Mott | <i>Totaram</i> | Macmillan, 1933. (4-5) |
| 35. Isasi, Mirim and Denny, Melcena Burns | <i>White Stars of Freedom</i> | Whitman, 1942. (7-8) |
| 36. Tunis, John R. | <i>All-American</i> | Harcourt, Brace, 1942. (7-8) |
| 37. Credle, Ellis | <i>The Flop-eared Hound</i> | Oxford, 1939. (2-3) |
| 38. DeJongs, Meindert | <i>Dirk's Dog, Bello</i> | Harper, 1939. (4-6) |
| 39. Petersham, Maud and Miska | <i>An American ABC</i> | Macmillan, 1941. (1-4) |
| 40. Becker, May Lamberton | <i>Growing Up With America</i> | Stokes, 1941. (5-8) |
| 41. Lenski, Lois | <i>Indian Captive</i> | Stokes, 1941. (5-8) |
| 42. Brink, Carol Ryrie | <i>Caddie Woodlawn</i> | Macmillan, 1935. (5-8) |
| 43. Lawson, Robert | <i>They Were Strong and Good</i> | Viking, 1940. (2-5) |
| 44. Fast, Howard | <i>Haym Salomon, Song Of Liberty</i> | Messner, 1941. (7-8) |
| 45. Meadowcroft, Enid L. | <i>Abraham Lincoln</i> | Crowell, 1942. (5-8) |
| 46. Foster, Genevieve | <i>George Washington's World</i> | Scribners, 1941. (7-8) |
| 47. Regli, Adolph | <i>The Mayos</i> | Messner, 1942. (8) |
| 48. Wood, Laura N. | <i>Sir Wilfred Grenfell</i> | Messner, 1943. (8) |
| 49. Fox, Genevieve | <i>Walter Reed, Doctor In Uniform</i> | Crowell, 1942. (6-8) |
| 50. Seuss, Dr. | <i>And To Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street</i> | Vanguard, 1937. (1-4) |
| 51. McCloskey, Robert | <i>Make Way For Ducklings</i> | Viking, 1941. (Kg-2) |
| 52. Sandburg, Carl | <i>Rootabaga Stories</i> | Harcourt, Brace, 1923. (2-6) |

Watch for These Important Fall Books

COMPILED BY AGATHA SHEA AND STAFF¹

- Anderson, C. W., *Big Red*. Macmillan, \$2.00.
 Aulaire, Ingri and Edgar d', *Don't Count Your Chicks*. Doubleday, \$2.50.
 Avison, George, *Uncle Sam's Army*. Macmillan, \$1.00.
 Buck, P. S., *Water-Buffalo Children*. John Day, \$1.50.
 Ewen, David, *Story of George Gersbwin*. Holt, \$2.50.
 Fish, H. D., *Pegs of History*. Stokes, \$2.00.
 Flack, Marjorie, *New Pet* (illus. by the author). Doubleday, \$1.50.
 Gag, Wanda, tr. and il., *Three Gay Tales From Grimm*. Coward-McCann, \$1.50.
 Gates, Doris, *Sensible Kate*. Viking, \$2.00.
 Gatti, Ellen and Attilio, *Here Is Africa*. Scribner, \$2.50.
 Hader, Berta and Elmer, *Mighty Hunter*. Macmillan, \$2.00.
 Said to be the Haders at their most humorous and most delightful.
 Jones, J. O., ed., illus. by E. O. Jones, *Small Rain: Selections from the Bible*. Viking, \$2.00.
 Jones, Mary, *Tell Me About God*. Rand, \$2.00.
 Lathrop, Dorothy, *Puppies for Keeps!* Macmillan, \$2.00.
 Lawson, Robert, *Watchwords of Liberty: a pageant of American quotations* (illus. by the author). Little, \$2.00.
 Leaf, Munro, *Health Can Be Fun*. Stokes, \$1.35.
- Lenski, Lois, *Davy's Day*. Oxford, \$0.75.
 Lewiton, Mina, *John Philip Sousa, the March King*, Didier, \$1.50.
 Lovelace, M. H., *Down Town, a Betsy-Tacy Story*. Crowell, \$2.00.
 McCloskey, Robert, *Homer Price*, (illus. by the author.) Viking, \$2.00.



From Leaf, *Health Can Be Fun*. (Lippincott).



From Leaf, *Health Can Be Fun*. (Lippincott).

- Mitchell, L. S., *Red, White and Blue Auto*. Scott, \$1.00.
 Neilson, F. F., *Mocha the Djuka*. Dutton, \$2.00.
 Paull, Grace, *Squash for the Fair*. Doubleday, \$1.50.
 Rojankovsky, Feodor, *Tall Book of Nursery Tales*. Harper, \$1.00.
 To be watched for with interest because of Rojankovsky illustrations.
 Serdy, Kate, *Open Gate*, (illus. by the author.) Viking, \$2.50.
 Travers, P. L., *Mary Poppins Opens the Door*. Reynal, \$1.75.
 Undset, Sigrid, *Sigurd and His Brave Companions*. Knopf, \$2.00.
 Van Loon, H. W., *Life and Times of Simon Bolivar*, (illus. by the author.) Dodd, \$2.50.

¹ Of the Thomas Hughes Room, Chicago Public Library.

Children's Books of Early 1943

FRIEDA M. HELLER¹

During the past years there has been decided growth in the number of desirable books for children. Many persons interested in the child and his development have been concerned recently over the possibility of a decrease in the number of such titles due to scarcities and rationing. However, during the first half of this year an astonishing array of beautiful and interesting books for young readers have come from the presses. A number have already won recognition on the merits of both content and format. Of these titles some are particularly adapted to the very young group or to those interested in picture books, others to those children who are a little older but still below the "teen-age." These are readers to whom the titles considered here will appeal.

For The Younger Group

For the young child and for those to whom picture books appeal there is Hugh Troy's *Five Golden Wrens* (Oxford), a fairy tale with a twentieth century touch. With words and pictures it tells the story of a king who wore a crown equipped with a radio. "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown," but even more uncomfortable was the royal head that wore a crown and a radio. Each news broadcast pouring into the poor king's ears carried more distress than the other. He became more and more upset and was on the verge of a breakdown, when five wrens mistaking this strange crown for a birdhouse decided to settle down and live there. So happy were they in their new home that they poured forth their joy in golden song. The king hearing their liquid notes thought he had tuned in on a station heretofore unknown. Under the beauty and the soothing effect of the music supplied by the wrens the king's nerves relaxed and once more he was able to look upon life as something to be enjoyed. He again turned his attention to his kingdom, affairs began to prosper, and all came out well. In the story there are some of the characteristic elements of the fairy tale, such as the rival queen who tries to steal the wrens to make a meat pie, and the beautiful but lowly

kitchen maid. The bold, clear pictures are as gay and humorous as the story itself.

Little children who have just left babyhood will delight in the story of another baby, *Michael the Colt* (Houghton Mifflin). This little colt has difficulty in learning to manage his awkward legs and his first attempts at standing and walking provide exactly the type of material to furnish the kind of humor that children love in pictures and in story. Katherine Garbutt carries the tale of Michael through from learning to walk, to following his mother about sticking close to her side and finally running along by himself inside the fence to follow the horses on the other side. Then comes the day when Michael, now four weeks old, is put in a pasture where there are other colts who become his playmates. Both the writer and the illustrator, Bernard Garbutt, have given a true picture of a colt's babyhood—so true, indeed, that it will strike a note of understanding in very young readers for other very young creatures. This makes of the small book something more than just another picture book about an animal.

Today we need to build morale and lend our efforts toward victory. If little tots need morale builders then *Corporal Keeperupper* (Scribner's) by Katherine Milhous should be on the bookshelves of the nursery and the kindergarten. Patriotic colors are used for the attractive illustrations of this story of Bill's favorite toy—the Wooden Soldier. Since Bill's father had gone to war, the toy soldier developed a strong desire to again enlist for service. During the Revolutionary War a soldier in Washington's army had carved him from a piece of wood and carried him as a mascot. In the Civil War he saw battle from the pocket of a drummer boy. When the first World War broke out he was in France with an American boy who sent him to a hospital as a loan to help cheer the wounded convalescing there. Now he must try to help again in some way. So he was given a place on the Home Front as a Corporal and assigned the

¹Librarian of the University School, Ohio State University.

duty of keeping children cheerful and well-behaved while their parents worked in war industries. The theme of the little story is that even the very small and very young may help in this time of crisis.

For this younger group there is also Mabel Leigh Hunt's *Peddler's Clock* (Grosset), with pictures by Elizabeth Orton Jones. This Story Parade Picture Book which was chosen as an honor book by the Children's Spring Book Festival, is a story of a clock in pioneer days in Connecticut. Clocks were luxuries in those days and Timothy's mother longed for one to place on her shelf. His father, seeing little reason for buying clocks when stock was needed, bought a cow instead. One day when the father was away from home a peddler came along with clocks, and the mother, determined to have one at any cost, traded the new cow for the clock of her choice. However, Timothy, who had made quite a pet of the cow felt her loss keenly and to get her back offered to work as an apprentice to the clockmaker. The father touched by the boy's love for his pet decided to buy back the cow and let the family own both the cow and the clock. Small and delightful illustrations using motifs of flowers and cowbells adorn the text. Full-page pictures carry the atmosphere of the period in which the story is laid.

Pito's House (Macmillan), storied and pictured by Catherine Bryan and Mabra Madden, is a most hilarious version of a folktale from Mexico. Pito's wife complains again and again



From *Pito's House* (Macmillan).

about her house being too small, and poor Pito can finally endure her complaints no longer. He takes his troubles to the Padre, who helps him find a very simple and also a very surprising way of settling the matter. The book is very easy reading and will be found useful in the early grades. Another title—and a very pleasing one—for all those interested in picture books, is *Nura's Children Go Visiting* (Studio Publications), which contains more of

the beautiful lithographs for which Nura has become known. These unusual illustrations accompany a rhyme concerning an old fellow who likes to gather children about him. On the pages of the book these children appear doing just those things in which children lose themselves—sometimes they are mere babies sleeping soundly, sometimes little girls with their pets, sometimes boys absorbed with hammering away or tiny tots sailing toy boats.

Books which will be of help to parents and to teachers of the pre-school age are the "Nursery Books." One title in this series is Roberta Whitehead's *Five and Ten*. (Houghton Mifflin), delightfully illustrated by Lois Lenski. It is the story of the exciting visit of a little girl to the "ten-cent store" to spend as she chooses the five bright pennies given to her on her fourth birthday. It is a great occasion and the whole family goes along the street of the little town to the store with counters holding many inexpensive articles. Each member of the family spends a nickel but Molly holds her five precious pennies tightly in her hand while she scrutinizes each purchase made. She hesitates to buy. She must be certain that she makes a wise purchase, for pennies are scarce with her. Finally she sees that for which any four-year old would give her fortune—a balloon. Step by step the pictures follow the family on its shopping tour and with their gay colors add immeasurably to this small tale for small people.

The Middle Group

For the next age group—those still under twelve years old—one outstanding title is Laura Ingalls Wilder's *These Happy Golden Years* (Harper). This is the eighth in a series of books telling the story of a girl and her life in pioneer America. These books have followed Laura from earliest childhood days in the "big woods" of Wisconsin to life in the Indian Territory, into Minnesota, and on to Dakota. In the later titles in this series of autobiographical fiction the young reader meets Almanzo Wilder who grew up in New York State but moved to the Middlewest later. In the new title, *These Happy Golden Years*, Laura begins teaching school and "boarding out." Almanzo, whom she is planning to marry, comes each weekend to drive her home. The new development may bring a

pang of regret to young readers, who realize that perhaps this will be the last of the "Laura" books. The books in the series give an exceptionally fine story of a pioneer family and will provide for many children a record of life in America during those days when people were moving westward.

Another distinctive title is *Mounted Messenger* (Macmillan), in which Cornelia Meigs in her thoughtful and careful manner has given to the "middle-age group" an authentic story of the first mail routes to the West. It was in 1755 that Benjamin Franklin as the king's postmaster for the colonies planned for mail to be carried by post riders to the people living along the Susquehanna. This would bring them news of the happenings in the larger settlements and establish that mutual understanding and desire for union of which the colonies were in need. Tom Wetherell, a restless lad of sixteen years, who wants to get off the Pennsylvania farm on which he lives, will use any means which presents itself. He is hired as one of the first riders on the western mail route. When the French and Indian War breaks out Tom plays his part by helping get men and horses for Braddock's army. Meanwhile at home his younger sister helps prepare the copies of the news which are to be distributed among the settlers. The book provides a good story of adventurous service in pioneer times and the difficulty of communication in that day. It is permeated with Franklin's belief in the importance of bringing the colonists closer together for their mutual protection.

A story written for Swiss children and translated for young American readers is *Green Wagons* (Houghton Mifflin), by Oskar Seidlin and Serita Rypins. This may be called a "mystery," for it tells of a theatrical troupe unjustly blamed for the theft of the town's chief treasure—a very old golden apple for which at one time ten thousand dollars had been offered. The mayor's son believing in the innocence of the actors takes their part and organizes the children of the town into a group to help solve the problems of the Pedroni theatrical troupe. Their troubles had been growing in number. The town would not let them present a single performance, the head of the troupe was thrown into jail because of fighting; and two boys of the organi-

zation were accused by the shopkeeper's daughter of stealing the cabbage which they had really bought. Since no grown-up would give a bit of help to the poor Pedronis, it was up to the children to do what they could. They gave a benefit play to lend financial assistance, and an American millionaire who had hoped to purchase the golden apple helped them produce one on the principle of Hamlet's mousetrap, and thus the real thief was revealed. Everything that happened in the story is something which could really happen with such children as those in the tale involved. The story is well-sustained and lively throughout and its characters are quite convincing.

A most unusual tale and one of the prettiest books of the year is Eleanor Hoffman's *Mischief in Fez* (Holiday House), illustrated by Fritz Eichenberg. Set upon a colorful background of modern life and customs in northern Africa, the tale concerns a terrible family in which evil spirits reign. A little magic animal takes the shape of a desert fox, a fennec, to protect this Moroccan household. This good little spirit wages a great struggle against the evil spirits. The story moves along with rapidity and interest. Of course, the little fennec finally wins out to become a pet of the household for the rest of his life. This fairy tale is expertly illustrated.

Another title dealing with that part of the world on which attention has been centered is Louise Stinetorf's *Children of North Africa* (Lippincott), illustrated by Frank Dobias. The twelve short stories found in this book concern children, both native and European, and serve to present social life and customs of this part of Africa. Among the characters introduced are Nasir, guide to tourists and possessor of many tricks, Aida of the Sudan with her superstitious belief in evil spirits, Abed the Moslem with many good Christian friends, Cletis the sponge diver, Abd el Karujeh who lived in a cave, a little English girl who spoke a number of languages and earned from the natives her nickname "Miss Tower-of-Babel," little Jeanne of French birth, and Ellen the American. The children are real and varied enough to demonstrate the varieties of populations found in this part of the world. From the use of this book young readers will gain worthwhile information and better yet secure genuine pleasure.



Courtesy of the American Library Association.

A *must* for this age group—and in fact for all age groups—is a quotation book for children that is different from all others. It is a pageant of American quotations—words that have been said in great times and on great occasions—selected and illustrated by Robert Lawson and compiled under the title, *Watchwords of Liberty* (Little). Fifty-seven short sayings accompanied by drawings and brief descriptive matter serve to present an almost continuous history of America beginning with William Bradford's remarks at the time the Mayflower set sail for a new world and ending with remarks made during the present struggle for a better world in which all men may live. Such statements as "We hold these truths to be self-evident," "Give me liberty or give me death," and "Liberty and union, now and forever, one and inseparable" are basic truths in which the

American way of life is grounded. Words such as "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my county," "There is Jackson, standing like a stone wall," and "I propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer" are statements demonstrating man's undying belief in a cause for which he fought. Such cries as "Remember the Alamo," "Remember the Maine," and "Remember Pearl Harbor," are American war cries. Within its pages are statements made by men of few words but mighty action such as John Paul Jones' "I have not yet begun to fight," Perry's "We have met the enemy and they are ours," and Mason's "Sighted sub, sank same." This is a book which is held together by the spirit for which America fights today and because of its timeliness should be in the hands of every young American.

Children's Book Clubs and Awards

MARGARET M. CLARK¹

Within the past twenty-two years quality in contemporary children's books has been both stimulated and accorded recognition by a growing number of awards and book clubs, all of which have had their origin since Children's Book Week first emphasized on a national scale the importance of more and better books for children.

Most widely known among the awards and clubs are the Newbery, Caldecott, Julia Ellsworth Ford, New York Herald Tribune Children's Spring Book Festival, Downey and Junior Scholastic awards, and the Junior Literary Guild and Pro Parvulis book clubs. Their selections single out for special recognition some 86 titles from each year's output of several hundred children's books. While not every reader will be in agreement with all of the books chosen, the very existence of such widespread attention to the field of children's literature is a stimulus to the continued production of outstanding books.

The Newbery Medal

Earliest in the field of awards is the Newbery Medal, presented annually since 1922 for the most distinguished book published during the preceding year. Qualifications for eligibility of the book, in addition to literary distinction, are that it must be an original work written by a United States citizen or resident and have its first publication in the United States.

The medal is named in honor of John Newbery, a London bookseller of the eighteenth century, who pioneered in the field of children's book production. His tiny books bound in leather or gaily colored paper, and illustrated with small woodcuts, sold for a few pennies, which placed them within the range of a modest purse. Their content, though it reflected the didactic tone of the times, was planned for children's own enjoyment.

¹Head of the Lewis Carroll Room of the Cleveland Public Library.

Newbery's period is effectively introduced to children of today in Alice Dalgliesh's *A Book for Jennifer*, which commemorates the two hundredth anniversary of Newbery's publishing venture. This whimsically told story centers about the misadventures which befell Jennifer and her two brothers when they observed too conscientiously the moral precepts in *The History of Goody Two Shoes*, purchased during a visit to Mr. Newbery's juvenile library. A rich background of the times is skillfully woven into the story, and the book's format includes many of the features of Newbery's own little books.

Frederick Melcher, editor of *Publisher's Weekly* and founder of Children's Book Week, is donor of the Newbery Medal. It is awarded each year to the book chosen by vote of a committee of the Children's Library Association and the School Libraries Section of the American Library Association, who select from title nominations offered by the general membership. Most of the books chosen so far have been best suited to the reading interests of boys and girls ten to fourteen.

Muriel Cann, in her pamphlet *Newbery Medal Books 1922-1933*, offers a comprehensive and stimulating source of material on the history of John Newbery, the origin of the



From *Adam of the Road*, by Elizabeth Janet Grey, illustrated by Robert Lawson (Viking), the current Newbery winner.

medal, and a discussion of the earlier prize books, their authors and publishers, together with an analytical chapter on children's reactions to the books.

A list of the awards to date includes:

Awarded	Title	Author
1922	Story of Mankind	Hendrik Van Loon
1923	Voyages of Doctor Dolittle	Hugh Lofting
1924	Dark Frigate	Charles Hawes
1925	Tales from Silver Lands	Charles Finger
1926	Shen of the Sea	Arthur Chrisman
1927	Smoky, the Cowhorse	Will James
1928	Gay Neck	Dhan Mukerji
1929	Trumpeter of Krakow	Eric Kelly
1930	Hitty	Rachel Field
1931	Cat who Went to Heaven	Elizabeth Coatsworth
1932	Waterless Mountain	Laura Armer
1933	Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze	Elizabeth Lewis
1934	Invincible Louisa	Cornelia Meigs
1935	Dobry	Monica Shannon
1936	Caddie Woodlawn	Carol Brink
1937	Roller Skates	Ruth Sawyer
1938	White Stag	Kate Seredy
1939	Thimble Summer	Elizabeth Enright
1940	Daniel Boone	James Daugherty
1941	Call It Courage	Armstrong Sperry
1942	Matchlock Gun	Walter Edmonds
1943	Adam of the Road	Elizabeth Gray

Runners-up for this year's award were:

Middle Moffat by Eleanor Estes.

"Have You Seen Tom Thumb?" by Mabel Hunt.

The Caldecott Medal

The Caldecott Medal for the most distinguished picture book for children has been presented annually since 1938 to the artist whose work shows distinction both in his illustrations and in their harmony with the text. It is named in honor of Randolph Caldecott, an outstanding illustrator of children's books in nineteenth century England, who together with Kate Greenaway and Walter Crane pioneered in the making of modern picture books. A biographical sketch of Caldecott together with a list of his picture books is included in the July, 1938 *Horn Book Magazine*.

Frederick Melcher is the donor of the Caldecott as well as the Newbery Award and both were designed by Rene Chambellan, an American sculptor. Each year the bronze medals are struck from original casts to include the names of the winners. Technical requirements as to eligibility and the method of voting for the winner are the same as for the Newbery Award. Both medals are presented at the same time, usually in June, at

the annual conference of the American Library Association.

Picture books chosen since 1938 are:

Awarded	Title	Illustrator
1938	Animals of the Bible	Dorothy Lathrop
1939	Mei Li	Thomas Handforth
1940	Abraham Lincoln	Ingri & Edgar D'Aulaire
1941	They Were Strong and Good	Robert Lawson
1942	Make Way for Ducklings	Robert McCloskey
1943	The Little House	Virginia Burton

Runners-up for the 1943 awards were:

Dash and Dart by Mary and Conrad Buff

Marshmallow by Clare Turlay Newberry

The Spring Book Festival

The Children's Spring Book Festival prizes were inaugurated by the New York *Herald Tribune* in 1937 for the express purpose of encouraging a distribution of children's book publication throughout the year. Before this time most books were published to meet the seasonal demand between Children's Book Week and Christmas, and many worthwhile titles were overlooked in the pressure of heavy output during a brief period.

The *Herald Tribune* originally offered two annual prizes of \$250 for the best books for younger children and for older children published between January and June. In addition, five honor books were chosen for each of the two age-groups from among the runners-up. In 1941 this plan was adjusted to create three age divisions: older children, readers under twelve, and the picture book age. Three two hundred dollar prizes have since been awarded



From *Adam of the Road* (Viking).

for the best book in each class, and four runners-up are named as honor books in each group. May Lamberton Becker, editor of the children's book review page of the *Herald Tribune* and nationally known authority on children's books, heads the group of judges for each year's contest. Announcements of the winning books make their first appearance in the pages of the *Herald Tribune* on the first or second Sunday in May.

Awards since 1937, arranged so that books for younger children appear first, are as follows:

Awarded	Title	Author
1937	Seven Simeons	Boris Artzybasheff
	Smuggler's Sloop	Robb White
1938	The Hobbit	J. R. Tolkien
	The Iron Duke	John Tunis
1939	The Story of Horace	Alice Coats
	The Hired Man's Elephant	Phil Stong
1940	That Mario	Lucy Crockett
	Cap'n Ezra, Privateer	James D. Adams
1941	In My Mother's House	Ann Clark
	Pete	Tom Robinson
	Clara Barton	Mildred Pace
1942	Mr. Tootwhistle's	
	Invention	Peter Wells
	I Have Just Begun to Fight	Edward Ellsberg
	None but the Brave	Rosamond Marshall
1943	Five Golden Wrens	Hugh Troy
	These Happy Golden Years	Laura Wilder
	Patterns on the Wall	Elizabeth Yates

The Julia E. Ford Award

The Julia Ellsworth Ford Foundation, established in 1934, differs from other awards in that it selects from manuscripts submitted competitively rather than from books already chosen for publication. Suttonhouse, Henry Holt, and more recently Julian Messner have acted as publishers of the winning books. The purpose of the foundation is to encourage "originality and imagination in children's literature in the United States." Prizes have varied between \$1250 and \$3000 through the years, and distribution of awards originally covered several manuscripts. Since 1938, only one winning manuscript has been chosen each year. The age appeal of this award varies from year to year, but is chiefly for children in the upper elementary grades and through the high school years.

Mrs. Ford, sponsor of the Foundation, is over eighty years old and has written several books and plays, both juvenile and adult. She

is mother of Lauren Ford, well-known illustrator of children's books.

Prize awards and publication were given to the following books:

Awarded	Title	Author
1935	Shaggy, the Horse from Wyoming	Russell Carter
	Horns of Gur	Maribelle Cormack & W. P. Alexander
	Shadow Cat	Beatrice Prior
	Singing Paddles	Julia Butler
	Gabby Gaffer's New Shoes	May Justus
1936	Shadow of Half-Moon Pass	E. M. Baker
	In the Days of the Han	M. Jagendorf
	Burro of Angelitos	Peggy Church
	Bela, the Juggler	Jeanette Shirk
	Near-Side-and-Far	May Justus
	Merry Frogs	Idella Purnell
1937	My Brother Was Mozart	Benson Wheeler
	The Stage Struck Seal	James Hull
1938	"Hello, the Boat!"	Phyllis Crawford
1939	Falcon, Fly Back	Elinore Blaisdell
1940	Listening Man	Lucy Embury
1941	Walt Whitman, Builder for America	Babette Deutsch
1942	Journey Cake	Isabel McMeekin
1943	Valiant Minstrel	Gladys Malvern

Other Awards

The Downey Silver Medal Award is one of the newest in the field of children's literature. In December, 1942 it was presented for the first time to Covelle Newcomb, author of *Red Hat*, a life of Cardinal Newman. This medal is to be presented annually for the "finest American children's book written in the Catholic tradition" and published during the previous year. The award is named in tribute to Father Francis Downey, well-known Jesuit missionary and educator who died in 1942.

Another of the recent awards is the Junior Scholastic Gold Seal which originated in January, 1942 for the purpose of introducing outstanding books to teachers and pupils through the pages of its magazine. The Gold Seal is awarded together with a folio stating that it is recommended by *Junior Scholastic* magazine for "the enjoyment of the boys and girls of America and for the enrichment of their lives." The award is announced within six weeks of the book's publication date. The book selections made so far have been best suited to upper elementary and junior high grades.

Gold Seal books to date are:

Awarded	Title	Author
1942	Adam of the Road	Elizabeth Gray
	Citadel of a Hundred Stairways	Alida Malkus
	I Have Just Begun to Fight	Edward Ellsberg
	Indian Captive	Lois Lenski
	The Mayos	Adolph Regli
	Paul Bunyan	Esther Shephard
	Shooting Star	William Wilson
1943	Gift of the Forest	R. Lal Singh and Eloise Lowmsbery
	Struggle is Our Brother	Gregor Felsen
	Tom Whipple	Walter Edmonds
	Walter Reed	Laura Wood
	We'll Meet in England	Kitty Barne

This coming December the Child Study Association of America Children's Book Committee will confer its first honorary award for the book published during the year which best portrays the contemporary scene and deals "with the realities of this scene in a way that will help to clarify vexing—perhaps controversial—current problems." The feeling of the committee is that children need to be aware of the social and economic problems at home and good neighbor relations abroad, if they are to comprehend and practice democratic living in their daily lives. Other requirements for this very timely award are that the story must be worthwhile and read for its own sake, and that it direct its appeal to readers between the ages of nine and fourteen.

The decision to create this award is based on the limited number of such books available, and on the hope of focusing "the attention of parents, teachers, and publishers on the importance of books of this kind for today's children." Mrs. Hugh Grant Straus is chairman and Mrs. Josette Frank is staff advisor of the Children's Book Committee which will present the new award.

The Book Clubs

A successful organized movement in encouraging ownership of books among children has been the establishment of book clubs on lines similar to those of adult clubs. Two of the best known are the Junior Literary Guild and Pro Parvulis.

The Junior Literary Guild was established in June 1929 with a board of editors which remains unchanged after fourteen years: Helen Ferris, Angelo Patri, Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt and Mrs. Sidonie Gruenberg. Every month

the Guild editors choose one book for each of four age groups: boys and girls 6, 7, 8; boys and girls 9, 10, 11; older girls; and older boys. Books are then sent to the members according to the age group in which they are registered. Schools and libraries as well as individuals are eligible for membership.

A copy of the Guild's monthly magazine *Young Wings* accompanies each book. It includes descriptions of characters and backgrounds of the selected books, biographical sketches of the authors and illustrators, and a correspondence column for young readers entitled "What I think about my Junior Guild Books." Members are encouraged to send in photographs, names, and ages along with their letters. School and library classes and clubs also mail in photographs together with accounts of their projects and activities. The magazine is available on a subscription basis to non-members.

The Pro Parvulis Book Club for Catholic children was organized in December, 1935, by Father Francis Downey, for whom the recently instituted Downey Award is named. The club offers recommended titles from the general field of children's books combined with books that "inculcate Catholic cultural and traditional backgrounds." Membership in the club is available to individuals and church, school, and library groups. Books are chosen for four age classifications: children under ten, boys ten to fifteen, girls ten to fifteen, and high school age. Six books a year are sent to members of each group on a bi-monthly basis. A quarterly magazine, *The Herald*, is also sent to each member. It includes reviews of the selected books, stories about the authors, occasional book lists on special topics, club news and notes from correspondents. Non-members may subscribe to the magazine. Miss Mary Kiely, author and librarian, is editorial secretary of Pro Parvulis, working with a board of eighteen representative priests, nuns, and laymen.

Two of the most striking features of the children's clubs and awards surveyed are their unanimity of purpose and their rapid growth within a comparatively few years. Six of the eight summarized have been introduced within the past ten years, two of them since 1942. Their purpose, stimulating the reading and ownership of good books, is one in which

every adult interested in enlarging the horizons of children will be eager to share.

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Pupil Participation in the Elementary School Library

FLORENCE TREDICK¹

School had begun and the First Graders were almost due for their weekly library period, when a tall boy from the sixth grade library committee came over to where I was accessioning books, *Angus Lost* in his hand.

"Do you think," he asked, "that little children like this story? The first grade hasn't heard it. I asked their teacher. And I practised it last night. I know it almost by heart."

As he stood before me he seemed the most unlikely of story tellers. He was all-hands-and-feet-and-no-looks. Added to lack of presence was language difficulty, as he came from a home where no English is spoken. And I choked a bit as I answered, "If *you* like the story, I'm sure they will." We hastily planned a few words of introduction and were setting other *Angus* books on book cases here and there when the children filed in.

They did like it. As he stood before them, his awkwardness was not important. He read well, and the story came alive as he turned the pages. That he should want to read aloud to

¹Mrs. Tredick is Library Adviser in the public schools of Schenectady, N. Y.

smaller children at the age when we adults expect boys to furnish the mischief element seems to me the all-important part of the incident.



Courtesy of the American Library Association.

Such moments make worth-while the all but endless amount of mechanical and clerical work we have been doing in Schenectady to organize the books and materials in our elementary schools into libraries: accessioned, classified, and cataloged according to established library procedure. We shall finish the setting-up process this year and at last have some sort of library service for each of the city's twenty-seven schools. In the three high and five junior high schools are fully-trained librarians and standard equipment, and once in the golden 1920's we boasted two libraries with full-time librarians in the elementary school division. Then came the educational slough of despond known as the depression; and a crisis arose as the librarians vanished at the very moment when new aims of education and new teaching methods made libraries indispensable.

What to do was a problem. The budget could provide no librarians, yet, paradoxically, we were deluged with N. Y. A and W. P. A. help. At least we could gather up what books and materials we had. We could sort, mend, organize. If the books were in a central room in each building, we could take a look at them, see what we had, and note our greatest lacks. One good collection in each school for the use of all would surely be more economical in time of distress than trying to buy for classroom libraries.

So in 1933 we set up a mending unit of W. P. A. workers. We evolved a form for the organization of libraries and taught a W. P. A. Supervisor how to follow it once the books had been classified. They were washed, marked, shellacked, accessioned, pocketed, shelved. Shelf-list cards and catalog cards were made from the accession records; and lists of the books were made for the children who keep the shelves in order.

Teacher and Pupils Take Charge

In each building a sixth-grade teacher and her group have assumed charge of the library. Job analysis divides the work into small tasks, each handled by an individual child or a committee. Mary Jane wept that she had no part in the library work. The next day she bounced home all smiles. She had been made key custodian; and for the rest of the term faithfully and with a flourish unlocked the door

at 8:45 each day and locked it again at 3:30. There are dusters and plant waterers. Bulletin boards are in charge of a group of children, with the art teacher as consultant and adviser. Each class group comes to the library once a week to draw books for home and school reading, to browse, to hear stories, or to have a library lesson (given by the teacher under the supervision of the library adviser). These library periods are assisted by committees of sixth grade children, working in pairs. They manage the circulation; they read aloud to small groups of children or to a whole class; they help the children read silently; they help find and select books. Sometimes they help teachers and children find reference materials.

For example, committee assignments for this term at a typical school library looks like this:

Care of Plants	
Grace and Eleanor	
Dusting	
Helen	
Frances	
Door Key	
Mary	
Exhibits	
Peter	
Lynn	
Reading aloud to Grades 1 - 3	
Jean	Ann
William	Peggy
Nora	Helen
	Kate
	Nancy
Book Selection	
John	
Greta	
Bulletin Boards	
Stanley	
Mary F	
Charging Books for Classes	
Discharging Books	
Shelving Books	
16 children, working in pairs do this work.	

"I went through high school and college," said a sixth grade teacher who has charge of such a group, "and have done graduate work without knowing half so much about a library as these children know now. Why didn't some one at some period in all that education teach me more about a library than that it was a room with a lot of books in it, teach me to use a library intelligently? Think what it will mean to these children all their lives to be so at home with books!"

Think what it means too in child growth and development, in functional education, this experience in cooperative democratic living. It is an environment where the child is encouraged to accept obligation; to be considerate of others; to improve social skills; to better his ability in self-direction; and to build up a sense of accomplishment and competency in a field of service to society. He is a contributing member of an active social group.

Developing Skills

Special skills are growing too. I have been working this term at Hamilton School, where the 6th grade teacher and I organized their some 2,000 hodge-podge books into a library.



Courtesy of the American Library Association.

There was work for all her group of thirty-four children, when I came, and among them were my special helpers—James and Michael. If they could, they beat me to the classification number by finding the book we were doing in the Children's Catalog, or by guessing. They wrote it in the book at the proper place. They stamped the books with the name of the school. They put in the accession numbers. They arranged the factory belt line down which the book went: from the children who washed it, to me to classify, to the teacher to mark, to the shellackers, back to me to accession and shelf-list, then off to the school secretary for pockets and cards, after which the children pasted and shelved it. W. P. A. helpers are long since gone from our schools; but we worked along at high speed, doing

about 100 books a morning, stopping for discussion, should need arise. Elsie wrote our decisions in a note book. "All transportation books go in the 300's." "Shelve all Mc names under Mac"; and so on.

The children are proud that their library is the most beautiful room in the building. All classes work to keep it so. They like its neatness. The definiteness of a place for each book, the need for accuracy, the way things check never cease to fascinate them. It is school work that is alive. They are struck by the importance of alphabetical arrangement. "We never really knew the alphabet before: 'q-r-s-t'" they say. They file circulation cards, put the cards for new books into the catalog, or read the shelves. Their library tasks teach them alphabet skills which greatly facilitate study use of indexes, dictionaries, card catalogs, and encyclopedias.

Promoting Reading Interests

Pupil participation also, as is obviously to be expected, fosters reading. One must read well to be allowed to read aloud. One must speak well and enunciate distinctly to be allowed to tell stories. To be listened to, one must organize the story well, or one's book report well.

Besides story-telling and reading aloud for smaller children, once a week book clubs for the older children meet in the library. Each table group reports to itself, with the teacher visiting here and there. A child chairman keeps a note book record at each table. The children vote on the best book talk, and one from each table is given before the whole class. It seems a simple device, yet results over a period of years show that it creates great interest in books, gets children into the habit of reading, encourages boys and girls to learn to read better. One sixth grade boy actually learned to read so as to be in a club. I visited his school the other day when he was reporting on Read's *A Story About Boats* (a story with 2nd grade vocabulary). Worth watching were the faces of the children at his table. They were as proud as parents of his achievement, fearful lest he miss a word, since I was listening, beaming when he finished creditably. Another boy of this group, a very brilliant lad, has written to and received replies from many favorite authors, and is starting to write a



Courtesy of the American Library Association.

book of his own. Each is progressing according to his ability. All, through much reading, are gradually acquiring a genuine sense of enjoyment in better and better books.

Raising Funds

Interest and enthusiasm for books run high in our Schenectady Elementary Schools. Outside school hours too the boys and girls do not forget to work for the library. Nor are parents idle. They help art teachers make draperies for library windows. From a benefit tea this fall a \$50.00 bill was sent the next morning to the astonished principal. P. T. A.'s vote generous amounts of money from their funds for books. The 6th grade children in one school by collecting waste paper and a movie benefit have raised \$150.00. They have painted their library furniture blue and the walls buff, and made pictures to harmonize. The room is gay and alive with color. More than two tons of paper was collected by another school, the

money from its sale going for books carefully selected by a committee whose members comprised children, teachers, and parents, all working with the library adviser.

With proper guidance and effective help all this interest can be capitalized into outstanding achievement. We need (1) wise book selection; (2) training for both teachers and children in story-selection and story-telling; (3) curriculum enrichment through expert reference service for teachers; (4) help for children in reference work; (5) reading guidance. Our teachers through summer courses in library science and children's literature can help keep the libraries going and growing in usefulness; but we need also librarians to work with and direct teachers and children.

Whatever steps we take, we shall not give up pupil (and community) participation. Working together in an enterprise makes the cause everyone's own. "I brought my mother to see the book her fifty cents bought," a little girl once said. There is a thrill in doing something for the good of all. And what Joy Morgan once wrote I hope is coming true in our midst:

"I believe the whole character of a community can be changed through an elementary school library. This wealth of books the children now enjoy will provide them with recreation and tools for work; but more than that, it will give them independence of choice, acquaintance with libraries that will make their continued use easy; it should so quicken their sense of values that for their children they may intelligently build up a rich reading background; and that is a rich heritage for the children of tomorrow."

Turn to "The Educational Scene,"
this issue, for announcement of
Review prize contest.

Children's Books on the United Nations¹

PLANNED AND SELECTED BY

THE COUNCIL ON BOOKS IN WAR TIME

IF WE ARE TO WIN THE PEACE as well as the war, it is essential that we provide tomorrow's citizens with the fullest possible understanding of the one world which will be theirs. The books listed here were chosen for their contributions to such an understanding. Through picture and story, history and biography, folklore and fact, they offer honest knowledge of and respect for the peoples and countries of the United Nations.

Children's Book Committee

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH

The Story of English Life. By Annabel Williams-Ellis and F. J. Fisher. Coward, \$3.75

England's history in terms of her people, their social progress and contributions to civilization, from their Stone Age beginning to 1936. (Ages 12 up).

Mary Poppins. By P. L. Travers. Reynal, \$1.50

A tale of wonder and hilarity in which four English children experience grand adventure, managed for them by their incomparable nurse Mary Poppins. (Ages 9-12).

We Didn't Mean To Go To Sea. By Arthur Ransome. Macmillan, \$2.00

The famous Swallows and Amazons children made a highly unexpected voyage to Holland when their boat drifted from its English river, out to sea. (Ages 10-14).

Visitors From London. By Kitty Barne. Dodd, \$2.00

An entertaining, yet wise and sincere war story about the London families evacuated to Steadings, a fine old farm that was safe from bombings. (Ages 10-13).

Australia. By Raffaello Busoni. Holiday, \$1.00

Compact information and colorful pictures

¹A more comprehensive United Nations bibliography, containing suggestions for films, pamphlets, posters, recordings, etc., as well as books, may be obtained from the U.S. Office of Education, Washington, D. C.

offer an attractive introduction to this continent, telling briefly of its history, native tribes, and modern life. (Ages 8-12).

Karoo, The Kangaroo. By Kurt Wiese. Coward, \$1.50

Animals strange to us but typical of Australia are shown in this picture book which tells young children a story about a baby kangaroo. (Ages 7-9).

The Lost Hole of Bingoola. By Lelia and Kilroy Harris. Bobbs, \$1.75

The Outback part of Australia, in all its vast remoteness, lives in this adventure tale of two young natives, a white boy and a black. (Ages 10-15).

Canada and Her Story. By Mary Graham Bonner. Knopf, \$2.00

A lively, readable history of the dominion which reflects its varied aspects, from lonely northern forests to busy modern provinces. (Ages 10 up).

Our India. By Minocheher Ruston Masani. Oxford, \$1.75

India's rich natural resources and undeveloped possibilities are described most graphically for Indian children with a moving appeal to their national pride. (Ages 10 up).

Totaram. By Irene M. Bose. Macmillan, \$1.75

Totaram is a village boy belonging to the middle Hindu caste. His daily life is both typical of modern India and true to child life everywhere. (Ages 7-10).

Gift Of The Forest. By R. Lal Singh and Eloise Lowmsbery. Longmans, \$2.50

In a compound near the Indian forest a royal Bengal tiger was a boy's pet. Well-created atmosphere conveys the oriental mysticism and awe of the jungle. (Ages 10-14).

Windy Island. By Theodore Acland Harper. Doubleday, \$2.00

Bob was a born "colonial," happy to live in picturesque New Zealand, island of winds and storms, mountains and plains, and strong tough people. (Ages 12 up).

Jock Of The Bushveld. By Sir Percy Fitzpatrick. Longmans, \$3.50

The classic of early days on the veld in South Africa, a stirring tale of outdoor men, wild animal life, and the dog, Jock. (Ages 12 up).

RUSSIA

Made In Russia. By William C. White. Knopf, \$2.00

Russian arts and crafts described against their historical and social backgrounds. Life in the various provinces before and after the Revolution is well developed. (Ages 10-15).

Adventures Of Misha. By Sergei Rosanov. Stokes, \$1.50

The misfortunes of Misha, a small boy lost in the Moscow railroad, involve the operation of the telegraph, railroad, motor bus, newspaper and other Russian methods of transportation and communication. (Ages 6-10).

Little Magic Horse. By Peter Pavlovich Ershoff. Macmillan, \$2.50

Spirited verse and illustrations make this translation of a great Russian folk tale a significant contribution to an understanding of Russian traditions. (Ages 8-12).

Struggle Is Our Brother. By Gregor Felsen. Dutton, \$2.00

Mikhail, a Cossack boy of today, joins the guerilla warriors to fight until all the Nazis have been driven from his homeland. In the end he knew "all the freedom loving people of the world were at his side." (Ages 12 up).

Stormy Victory. By Claire Lee Purdy. Messner, \$2.50

This biography of Tchaikovsky is a dramatic story of music and folklore with the Russian heritage always as a background. (Ages 12 up).

EUROPE

Belgium. By Anne Merriman Peck. Harper, \$1.50

Historic and modern Belgian life are described in attractive pictures and text. Stories

of festivals and legends add to the charm of the book. (Ages 7-11).

The Spear Of Ulysses. By Alison Baigrie Alesions. Longmans, \$1.75

Boys of modern Greece, in their quest for the spear of Ulysses, introduce many of the ancient customs and legends which still survive. (Ages 8-12).

Wings For Nikias. By Josephine Blackstock. Putnam, \$2.00

Nikias, a modern Greek boy, has the courageous spirit with which all his people have resisted aggression. (Ages 10-15).

Dirk's Dog, Bello. By Meindert DeJong. Harper, \$2.00

A delightful account of Dirk and his great Dane in a small Dutch village. Fine illustrations add to the vivid picture of life in pre-war Holland. (Ages 10-15).

Happy Times In Norway. By Sigrid Undset. Knopf, \$2.00

In the author's record of her own children's carefree childhood is a picture of a free and happy Norway before the Nazi invasion. (Ages 12 up).

Ola. By Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire. Doubleday, \$2.00

A distinguished picture book of Norway and a small boy's adventures on skis. (Ages 5-10).

Snow Treasure. By Marie McSwigan. Dutton, \$2.00

A true and thrilling story of the heroism of Norwegian children who, at great risk, save some of their country's gold from the Nazis. (Ages 9-14).

Paderewski: Pianist and Patriot. By Antoni Gronowicz. Nelson, \$2.50

The life of this great artist is as much a story of Poland as it is of music. Paderewski's devotion to his country begins in his childhood and continues through a long and eventful life. (Ages 12 up).

CHINA AND THE PHILIPPINES

The Pageant of Chinese History. By Elizabeth Seeger. Longmans, \$3.00

The colorful story of China from the dawn of history to modern times. Line drawings and maps by Bernard Watkins. (Ages 12 up).

The Questions of Lifu. By Eleanor Frances Lattimore. Harcourt, \$2.00

Simple and appealing story of childhood and home life in rural China under present day war clouds. Many drawings. (Ages 5-10).

Tales of a Chinese Grandmother. By Frances Carpenter. Doubleday, \$2.50

Ancient customs and authentic folk tales are skillfully woven into this story of a cultured Chinese family. Traditional illustrations by Malthe Hasselriis. (Ages 8-12).

When the Typhoon Blows. By Elizabeth Foreman Lewis. Winston, \$2.00

A vivid contemporary story of China at war. Action, character development and social significance. (Ages 12 up).

Lucio and His Nuong. By Lucy Herndon Crockett. Holt, \$2.00

Philippine Island story of a very small boy and a very large water buffalo. Vivid and convincing picture of native life. Excellent illustrations. (Ages 6-10).



From *Children of North Africa* (Lippincott).

AMERICA TO THE SOUTH

Neighbors To The South. By Delia Goetz. Harcourt, \$2.50

Interesting factual book on Latin America. Emphasis is laid on the strengthening bonds of commerce and culture uniting the Americas. Photographs. (Ages 11-14).



From *Riches of Central America*, "New World Neighbors" (Heath).

Maria Rosa. By Vera Kelsey. Doubleday, \$2.00

Everyday fun and carnival frolic with children in Brazil. Distinctive illustrations by Candido Portinari.

Red Jungle Boy. By Elizabeth K. Steen. Harcourt, \$2.50

Story of a young native in the jungles of Brazil, untouched by modern civilization. Richly colored pictures.

Panchita: A Little Girl Of Guatemala. By Delia Goetz. Harcourt, \$2.00

The world of a lively little girl in Central American mountains, with its home craftwork, household pets and gay fiestas. Well illustrated. (Ages 8-10).

The Boy Who Could Do Anything. By Anita Brenner. Scott, \$2.50

Amusing folk tales kept alive in Mexico through constant re-telling. Characteristic line drawings by Mexico's artist, Jean Charlot. (Ages 7-11).

Juarez: Hero Of Mexico. By Nina Brown Baker. Vanguard, \$2.50

Biography of Mexico's great patriot and first civilian president. Illuminating picture of Mexico's struggle to attain self-government. (Ages 12 up).

The Educational Scene

The National Council of Teachers of English will hold the Annual Business Meeting of its members, and the Board of Directors will meet, on Friday, November 26, in New York City (hotel still to be chosen). The New York City Association will hold a program meeting during the two days after Thanksgiving, and will probably be joined by at least the New Jersey and Westchester associations.

Meanwhile Public Relations Director Harold A. Anderson is urging the arrangement of local conferences wherever possible this fall, on November 26 if convenient. There may be a national broadcast from the New York meeting which local groups will be glad to hear for its own sake and for fellowship.

At the Annual Business Meeting some proposed amendments to the constitution of the Council, presented last year and laid on the table for a year's consideration, will come up for action. To spare the reader tiresome technical details, they provide (1) that the election of officers shall be by the *members* of the Council rather than by the Board of Directors as at present; (2) that the provisions concerning dues, both of individual members and of affiliated associations, be relegated to the By-laws, where they may be more readily modified if conditions change suddenly; (3) that affiliated local associations, now somewhat confusingly called "collective members" shall be called "affiliates"; and (4) that the requirement that all affiliations be passed upon by a membership committee be dropped.

The proposed new provision for the election of officers drops all provisions for the *manner* of election now in the constitution. A proposed by-law provides a fairly elaborate mail-ballot system, with a nominating and a final ballot. Any other method of election by the members would obviously give undue power to the members in the region of the national convention city.

The *Review* is conducting this fall a contest for elementary teachers and supervisors in

the writing of brief reports on experiences in the teaching of reading. First prize will be fifteen dollars; second prize, ten dollars; third prize, five dollars. Rules for the contest are as follows:

1. Contributions must be not less than 250 words nor more than 600 words in length.
2. Contributions must report actual teaching experiences with reading, either independent reading lessons or work in the content subjects, involving specific reading, research, or study skills, or the guidance of leisure reading, in any grade from 1 through 8.
3. The *Elementary English Review* reserves the right to publish any or all contributions received. Contributions will not be returned.
4. Any *bona fide* teacher or supervisor in English-language elementary schools is eligible.
5. All contributions must be in the Council office (211 West Sixty-eighth St., Chicago 21, Illinois) on or before October 21, 1943.

The American Library Association has designated October 24 - 30 as British Book Week, with the approval of the Office of War Information. The purpose behind British Book Week is the need to create mutual understanding between the United States and Great Britain in order to lay a solid foundation for postwar international relations. Mutual understanding in this instance is taken for granted to a much greater degree than in the case of Russia and China, and many misapprehensions exist in spite of the close ties that have always connected the two countries. Books can do a great deal to eliminate prejudice and to create positive interest. During British Book Week displays, film showings, assembly programs, class discussion and other methods can be used to encourage students to read books.

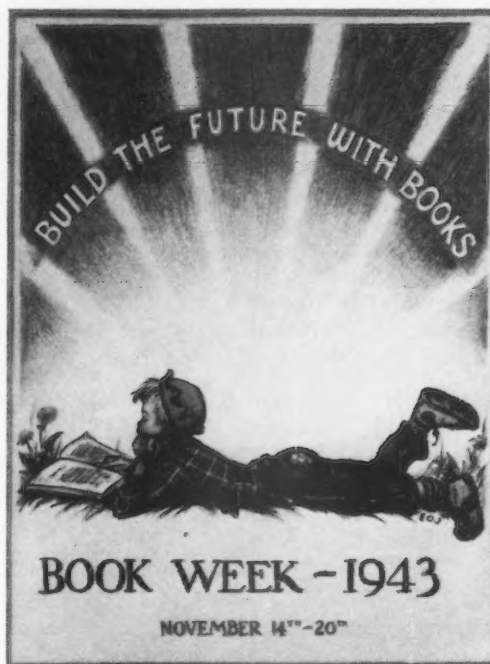
School libraries may hold open house during the week, giving each visitor attractive short booklists, bookmarks, or a quiz sheet on

British book characters and incidents. The quiz idea can be carried over into displays, with illustrations of scenes from books presented for identification. Student clubs or classes can be asked to make models of scenes from books, or dress dolls to represent characters from British fiction. Exhibits on travel and history will be easy to prepare. Picture maps of British literature are obtainable from the R. R. Bowker Company, 62 West 45th Street, New York City, \$2.50 apiece; or from Colortext, Inc., 646 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, \$1.00 per set. A British Book Week poster in color can be ordered from the American Library Association, 520 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, \$0.40 for single copies, \$0.75 for 10.

Assembly programs may feature documentary films on Britain at War to be borrowed, free of charge, from the British Information Services, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York City. Lists of recommended books about the British are available from the Council on Books in Wartime, 400 Madison Avenue, New York City; in the brochure issued in June 1943 for United Nations Book Week, by the U. S. Office of Education; and in *The Booklist* for June 1, 1943, pt. 2, available from the American Library Association. Other sources of information and program materials are: American Library Association, 520 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Ill.; U. S. Office of Education, Building M, 26th Street and Constitution Avenue, Washington, D. C.; United Nations Information Office, 610 Fifth Avenue, New York City; "Books Across the Sea" Circle in America, Room 1526, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York City.

The twenty-fifth annual observance of Children's Book Week takes place this year during the week of November 14-20. The theme for this year will be, "Build the Future with Books." A *Manual of Suggestions* will be issued free of charge on September 1 to 25,000 teachers, librarians, program chairmen, editors, broadcasters, and a host of other supporters of BOOK WEEK. The *Manual* includes an exposition of the purposes of BOOK WEEK 1943; a brief history of the project; suggestions to individuals, clubs and groups,

teachers and school librarians, public librarians, and booksellers; and descriptions of the BOOK WEEK aids available October 1 at a nominal cost. It urges all groups to co-operate and make BOOK WEEK a community effort using all available resources of the local press and radio.



The 1943 BOOK WEEK POSTER, designed by Elizabeth Orton Jones, in full color, is 16 x 19 inches. Prices are 25c each; 5 for \$1.00; 20 for \$3.00; and 100 for \$10.00. Book marks with the poster in miniature will be sold at the rate of \$1.75 per M; \$3.00 per 2M; and \$6.00 per 5M.

Junior Literary Guild selections for October are: P Group (boys and girls 6, 7, and 8 years old), *Dogie Boy*, by Edith Heal, Whitman, \$2.00; A Group (boys and girls 9, 10, and 11 years old), *American Warplanes*, Holt, \$2.00; B Group (older girls 12-16 years old), *Wenderley*, by Gertrude E. Mallette, Doubleday, \$2.00; and C Group (older boys 12-16 years old), *Australia; The Island Continent*, by Grace Allen Hogarth, from material supplied by Joan Colebrook, Houghton, \$2.00.

Review and Criticism

[The reviews in this issue were written by Mildred A. Dawson, Pearl Drubeck, Bernardine Schmidt, and Jean Gardiner Smith. The unsigned annotations are by the editor.]

FOR TEACHERS

English for Social Living: A Program Including 25 Statements of Practice by Teachers in the Field. Edited by Holland Roberts, Walter Kaulfers, and Grayson Kefauver. McGraw-Hill, \$3.50

An engrossingly interesting account of the co-operative enterprise of 151 teachers and administrators and 10,000 pupils in 28 high schools as they worked closely with the staff of the Stanford Language Arts Investigation in an effort to improve instruction in the language arts.

The broadened scope of English as conceived in the Investigation may be noted:

The objective of the language arts program should be to ensure that the purpose (of all language interchange) is a positive one, arising out of a primary concern with human welfare and the construction of a world in which improving and safeguarding the life interests of all human beings is the constant focus of our thought and action (pp. 17 and 18). The conscious purpose is to understand and appreciate American civilization as an integral part of present and past world civilizations and to develop penetrating cultural integration in the present and future by effecting communication of socially significant content through the medium of English and other languages. (p. 18).

According to these purposes, the teaching of English should contribute to social understanding and betterment.

Parts II to V present vividly descriptive reports of the participating teachers' classroom experiences—some of them as graphic and dramatic as chapters in well written fiction. "Democracy through English," the theme of Part II, reports democratizing experiences with group teaching, co-operative pupil criticism, low-ability groups, and the modern folklore implicit in the everyday problems of youth. In Part III are particularly fascinating accounts of personality development as the children "let themselves go" in writing their own thoughts or engage in round-robin evaluation with their parents and teachers. In other sections the teachers report how the pupils surveyed and planned better to serve their communities and acquired the skills and techniques required in reading, speaking, writing, and listening while intent on accomplishing their own socially significant purposes. Illustrative enterprises that contributed to the mastery of skills were the setting up of short-wave communication with other schools and a problem approach to world literature.

The vital experiences of the participants in the Investigation will prove stimulating and fruitful reading to English teachers, in particular, and to all teachers of older children, in general. It is refreshing and encouraging to find teachers who are teaching children, not their subject, and who have discovered that boys and girls become eloquent, graphic, and proficient in the language-arts skills as they express themselves on subjects of personal and social significance. The abundant use of pupil-products is especially convincing and revealing.

M. A. D.

FOR CHILDREN

Keystone Kids. By John R. Tunis. Harcourt, \$2.00

This is not only an exciting baseball story, written by one who knows the lore of the game and the jargon of the diamond, but a powerful weapon in the struggle against intolerance.

Spike and Bob Russell, the doubleplay combination at the keystone bag for the Nashville Vols, get their chance at the big time with the Brooklyn Dodgers. Spike, the elder, steps in as manager at a critical juncture when the team's morale is sagging badly. His steadiness, his fairness, his singleminded devotion to the game, help the team to make a remarkable rally. But with the pennant in sight, something happens to destroy the unity of the ball club. "Jocko" Klein, the new catcher, unhappily wins in a friendly card game with the leading hitter, a veteran and a prima-donna. From then on "Jocko" is the victim of merciless baiting motivated by a hitherto latent anti-semitism.

Spike's reaction is instinctive, not the result of reasoned philosophy. He undertakes at once to overcome the prejudice of his teammates, including that of his younger brother, and to stir Jocko's will to fight back. He succeeds with Jocko, who recovers his spirit and plays the best baseball of his life. The young catcher wins the respect of the team by his fighting spirit, until his detractors become his ardent defenders.

Between the breathless climaxes of the story Tunis is eloquent, never moralistic. After describing the courageous struggles of the immigrant groups from which the team members have sprung, he declares:

"These were some of the things Spike did not know about his team, the team that was lost and found itself. For now they were a team, all of them. Thin and not so thin, tall and short, strong and not so strong, solemn and excitable, Calvinist and Covenanter, Catholic and Lutheran, Puritan and Jew, these were the elements that, fighting, clashing and jarring at first, then slowly mixing, blending, refining, made up a team. Made up America!"

Freedom's Flag: The Story of Francis Scott Key. By Rupert Sargent Holland. Macrae-Smith, \$2.00

A slightly fictionalized biography of the composer of *The Star-Spangled Banner*, based apparently upon authentic historical data, and written for junior high school age youngsters. There are many incidental sketches of contemporary characters, including Presidents of the United States from Washington to Jackson. The beautiful frontispiece, reproduced on the cover of this issue of the *Review*, is by Manning DeV. Lee.

Mischief in Fez. By Eleanor Hoffman. Illustrated by Fritz Eichberg. Holiday House, \$2.00

Here is a story rich in the traditions of Morocco, written with beauty and strength, thrilling in its account of potent spells and enchantments, and so utterly convincing that you find yourself carrying a pinch of salt about, and carefully folding your clothes right side out at night lest one of Those Who Shun Salt find the way to assume your form and voice and with what dread consequences, Mousa himself can tell. Ya Allah. The illustrations in blue and white touch exactly the right note of laughter and of terrible enchantment. Grades 4-6.

J. G. S.



From Busoni, *Somi Builds A Church* (Viking).

Bombardier. By Henry B. Lent. Macmillan, \$2.00

Timely and exciting for all boys from six to sixty. The hero, Tom Dixon, takes his readers with him on an intense training period for the Army Air Forces, and finally wins his wings with the Bomber Command. The book is liberally illustrated with official photographs and has enough of the flavor of authentic experience to make it real and interesting as well as excellent fiction. The inside story of a demolition bomb or "egg," the use of a bomb trajectory and bomb sight, all phases of the work of a bombardier are explained.

P. D.



From *A Book of Myths* (Macmillan).

Vast Horizons. By Mary Seymour Lucas. Illustrations and maps by C. B. Falls. Viking, \$3.00

Beginning with the time of the Crusades in the European scene, and the rise of the Mongols in the Asiatic, Miss Lucas presents the slow expansion of the known world as men of courage pushed on toward the vast horizons beyond which lay lands and oceans unbound by the map makers. The Hanseatic League, though briefly described, lives again—a vital and lusty organization. The Mongols are more than a conquering tribe—they are human beings injured to hardship, and under their great leaders, a people amazingly organized. The emphasis is upon the Portuguese explorers and kings in the period from the 14th to the 17th Centuries. A brief summary of the Dutch and British power brings the story to a close.

Melody and words are given for fourteen songs, among which are a Crusader's song, a Mongol song, a Mohammedan call to prayer, and a Congo boat launching. Seven double spread maps by C. B. Falls include chief European and chief Asiatic trade routes, Asiatic travelers of the 13th and 14th centuries, main currents and trade winds, and Pacific area and Indian Ocean today. A list of Portuguese explorers, a bibliography, and an index add to the usefulness of the book. Grades 6-10.

J. G. S.

Derry the Wolfhound. Written and illustrated by Margaret S. Johnson and Helen Lossing Johnson. Harcourt, \$1.75

A vivid, full-page drawing appears opposite each page of large, clear print. The exciting story of Derry the wolfhound continues the excellent series of dog-stories by the same author-illustrators. Early elementary grades.

Small Flags Waving. By Anna Elizabeth Stebbins. Illustrated by Myna Lockwood. Dutton, \$2.00

When Uncle Andrew's political ambitions and selfishness made the Griswolds decide to leave Iowa, it seemed at first that Jane had lost all hope of becoming a famous ballerina, for her teacher could not come with them. But when they decided to go to New York, she felt certain her opportunity would come. However, life in a tiny apartment with a smelly oil stove was not at all glamorous. Although the picture of family life under adversity is well drawn, the characters seem to fit almost too well into their patterns and lack reality in spite of the realness of the situation. The book is definitely dated by Jed's continued reference to the European war in the pre-Pearl Harbor days. But the war itself plays a very small part in the lives of the characters of the story and seems dragged in. There are so many characters in the book, each with a problem of his own, that the result is a cluttered plot. Grades 5-6.

J. G. S.

Beyond the Clapping Mountains. By Charles E. Gillham. Illustrated by Chanimum. Macmillan, \$1.50

These American folk stories of strange animals and birds in Alaska are charmingly illustrated by a little Eskimo girl, who drew



her sketches with a broken stub pen wet in a bottle of frozen India ink. How the sea gulls learned to fly, how the clapping mountains got their name, why crows have short tails, are some of the tales told in simple, fascinating narrative, in which their young audience will delight.

B. G. S.

Everyday Birds. By Gertrude E. Allen. Houghton, \$0.85

Stories of the robin, chickadee, woodpecker, crow, duck, and the wren, told in simple language and lovely large drawings that will delight every little boy and girl who sees them. For the nursery school age.

B. G. S.

Beckoning Star. By Myna Lockwood. Dutton, \$2.00

This story of old Texas in the period when that territory was just being opened to American settlers provides a dramatic setting for continued adventure. Strikingly different in personality are Margot Paine and her brother Lee, who is finally forced by his sister to volunteer to join the frontier adventure into the new territory. The easy mode of living which stimulated intrigue and made of Lee a worthless chap are pictured only incidentally, but vividly. Lee's growth in his new adventurous setting seems authentic and at least makes an interesting story. For upper elementary grades.

B. G. S.

OTHER RECENT BOOKS OF INTEREST

(Recommended by Agatha Shea and Staff)

Bronson, W. S., *Grasshopper Book*. Harcourt, \$1.75.

Humorous, well illustrated account of the grasshopper and its relatives.

Burton, V. L., *Little House*. Houghton, \$1.75.

Delightful picture book of country and city and the changing seasons. The current Caldecott medal book.

Chase, Richard (Ed.), *Jack Tales, Folk Tales from the Southern Appalachians*. Houghton, \$2.50.

Dyett, James, *From Sea to Shining Sea*. Oxford, \$2.50.

Photographic picture book of the many phases of life in the United States to-day. A.S. Follett, Helen, *Islands on Guard*. Scribner, \$2.50.

Maps and photographs add to the value of the descriptive material of the islands in the Caribbean sea.

Gray, E. J., *Adam of the Road*. Viking, \$2.00.

Vividness and charm characterize this story of a minstrel boy in 13th century England. The current Newbery medal book.

Hark, Ann, *Story of the Pennsylvania Dutch*. Harper, \$1.00.

Beautiful colored lithographs enhance this book of regional history for younger readers.

Haywood, Carolyn, *Back to School with Betsy*. Harcourt, \$2.00.

Happy and humorous story of home and school life of a small girl.

Judson, C. I., *People Who Work in the Country and in the City*. Rand, \$2.75.

Pleasure and information for the second and third graders in these stories of rural and city workers.

Kinert, R. C., *America's Fighting Planes in Action*. Macmillan, \$2.50. A.S.

Meigs, Cornelia, *Mounted Messenger*. Macmillan, \$2.00.

Inspiring and significant story of the

French and Indian War period showing the romantic beginning of the United States postal service.

Newcomb, Covelle, *Silver Saddles*. Longmans, \$2.25.

Mexico provides the background for the exciting adventures of a boy and his horse.

A. S.

Peck, A. M., *Young Canada*. McBride, \$2.00.

The young people of Canada, their life and background vividly and interestingly portrayed.

Pollock, Katherine, *Sly Mongoose*. Scribner, \$1.75.

Colorful, amusing story of a little native boy of Trinidad.

Quinn, Vernon, *Picture Map Geography of Mexico, Central America and the West Indies*. Stokes, \$2.00.

Stansbury, Jean, *Bars on Her Shoulders*. Dodd, \$2.00.

Story with authentic background of the first officer's candidate class of WAAC's at Fort Des Moines. For seventh and eighth grade readers.

Stefansson, Evelyn, *Here Is Alaska*. Scribner, \$2.50.

Strikingly beautiful book with much up-to-date information on Alaska and the Eskimos.

Stinetorf, L. A., *Children of North Africa*. Lippincott, \$2.00.

Entertaining stories depicting life in the jungle, the desert and along the coast of Africa.

Thurber, James, *Many Moons*. Harcourt, \$2.00.

Whimsical picture story book of a little princess who wanted the moon.

Yates, Elizabeth, *Patterns on the Wall*. Knopf, \$2.00

Idealism and beauty permeate this story of a journeyman painter in New Hampshire of the early 1800's. For older readers.

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THE STORY OF THE OTHER AMERICA, a pictorial history by Richard C. Gill and Helen Hoke, "gives a clear, colorful picture of South America . . . the most usable and appealing book for elementary and junior high school pupils . . . *Junior Scholastic*" \$2.00

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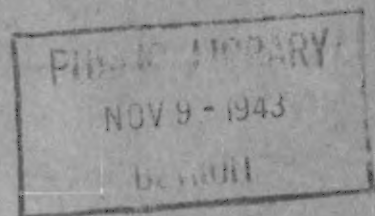
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REVIEW



From Little Magic Horse (Macmillan)

NOVEMBER 1943

AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS IN THE LANGUAGE ARTS

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DEVELOPING CHILDREN'S READING INTERESTS

A COMMITTEE REPORT

The Elementary English Review

An official organ of the NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH
211 W. 68th St., Chicago 21, Illinois

FOUNDED, 1924, BY C. C. CERTAIN

JOHN J. DEBOER, *Editor*

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